

GOOD NEWS!

CPS now has a MMSI group number, effective world-wide.

You may not be familiar with the Maritime Mobile Service Identity numbers, so let us tell you about them. They are used by the new marine VHF radios. The new feature is called DSC (Digital Selective Calling), and as a member of CPS, **you** now have a distinctive MMSI number. The MMSI number is like a telephone number in your VHF (and also in your MF radio).

The CPS Group number is **031 600 018**. This means that if you have DSC on your VHF radio, by clicking on this number, every CPS member who has DSC and is in radio range can receive your call.

All new VHF radios being made today have DSC. Each owner of a DSC radio can get a free MMSI # from Industry Canada. DSC is a new, efficient way of making Distress, Urgency, Safety and normal communication calls. In setting up a call, whether distress or non-distress, a digital data stream is transmitted on VHF channel 70. It contains such information as the name of the vessel, the owner, its present position and the nature of the call - Distress, Urgency, Safety or 'routine' (regular). If you place a routine call, it can be sent to an individual vessel just as you can place a phone call to an individual person. This is done by using that vessel's MMSI number. If you wish to call a number or "group" of vessels you use the "group" MMSI number.

Here is an example. For those CPS members who have VHF radios with DSC capability, they will have their own personal MMSI number. They will also have the option of using the CPS MMSI number which will enable them to call all other CPS members on a group basis - in other words, if they send out a call to the CPS group number, all CPS members with the CPS MMSI number programmed into their radios will get the message and may choose to converse on Channel 68 or some other channel designated for pleasure craft use.

Do you want a DSC radio? Yes, you really do. It has a lot of new capabilities. This is especially important if you are in a distress situation. DSC can do a great job of advising rescue vessels who you are, your exact location and type of emergency without your having to touch the microphone.

If you are buying a new DSC radio, ask the dealer if it is capable of being programmed with both your own personal MMSI number, **and** your CPS group MMSI number (not all radios have this capability).

All people applying for a new Restricted Operators Certificate (Maritime) **must** pass a test that includes the same material as we have been teaching for years and also some new material that includes DSC and other related information (called GMDSS). Reminder – while you may no longer have to have a Radio Station Licence, it is mandatory to have a Restricted Operators Certificate (Maritime) to operate your marine radio.

Those who already have their Restricted Operators Certificate (Maritime) should upgrade to the new endorsement by taking the Module 2 section of the CPS Maritime Radio Course. Contact your Squadron's Training Officer for information on this inexpensive course and get your new Restricted Operators Certificate (Maritime) with the DSC endorsement. Or call the CPS toll free number 1-888-CPS-BOAT for information on the course nearest to you.

Get a DSC/VHF radio, your personal MMSI number, and also enter your CPS Group MMSI number into your radio. Then you can meet your CPS friends on the air.

Past Chief Commander Tony Gardiner, SN