

MMSI Numbers

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Every fixed mount VHF radio manufactured after 1999 has **Digital Selective Calling (DSC)** capability. DSC-VHF radios require the implementation of a new system of identification called the **Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI)** numbers in order to take advantage of their full capabilities.

An MMSI number functions much like a phone number and allows boaters with **DSC-VHF** radios to make a touch-of-a-button emergency call that automatically transmits vital information to all other DSC-VHF radios within the caller's area.

FCC regulations prohibit US customers from resetting the MMSI number once it has been programmed. Within the US, only FCC certified radio technicians and dealers are permitted to reset MMSI numbers within VHF radios and AIS transceivers.

After a vessel is sold or transferred, the new owner may continue to use the MMSI associated with the vessel. For vessels with ship radio stations that had been registered by a private registration agent, the new owner must re register the privately-issued MMSI and the new emergency contact information with a private registration agent such as Seatow, Boat USA or the US Power Squadron. The former owner must give permission to cancel his registration. The agent can then update the file with the new owner's information.

For vessels registered by the FCC, the new vessel owner may continue to use the FCC-issued MMSI by requesting that MMSI when filing the application [Form 605 – Schedule B](#) and entering the requested MMSI in item 13. Similarly, purchasers of used equipment must ensure that the correct MMSI is programmed into the device before it is used on board a different vessel. In no case should the seller use the old MMSI on a different vessel if the buyer will continue using that MMSI.

The FCC has authorized assignment agents to collect the boater's identification particulars and to assign MMSI numbers. These organizations can make MMSI assignments on line or by calling the toll free number and there is no fee for the service:

Boat U.S.	https://www.boatus.com/products-and-services/membership/mmsi	1-800-395-2628
Sea Tow	https://seatow.com/marine-services/mmsi/	1- 800-473-2869
U.S. Power Squadrons	www.usps.org/php/mmsi	1-888-367-8777