



Maritime Mobile Service Network

Press Release

“Where Emergency Communications is a Commitment”

Maritime Mobile Service Network For Immediate Release, 6/27/23
Prepared by Jeff Savasta, KB4JKL, Net Manager

On 6/8/23 at approximately 1350 hrs on 14.300 MHz, a distress call was heard by Maritime Mobile Service Network member Dick Deutscher, K0BOT who alerted the on-duty net control station, Thomas Bishop, W5TWB. A unknown maritime vessel was heard calling a series of Maydays and was continually giving coordinates. The coordinates put the vessel off the coast of the United Kingdom. The station advised that they were taking on water and the pumps to the vessel were not working. Conditions on 20 meters were very poor so reception was very difficult.

MMSN Net control stations Mikel Brown, N9LAZ and Dick Deutscher, K0BOT assisted W5TWB in the relaying of information on the vessel. There were also other amateur radio stations that came on the frequency to attempt to give W5TWB assistance with the reception of the vessel. Through persistence of all the stations on the frequency assisting, a partial Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number was obtained.

When W5TWB notified the United States Coast Guard of the information, they advised that the vessel was in fact registered in the United Kingdom. A phone tie was setup by The US Coast Guard to His Majesty's Coast Guard in the United Kingdom. They advised that a search would be conducted in the area of the coordinates given for the vessel. As of this report, there is no further information on the vessel from the United Kingdom Authorities.

Tom, W5TWB advised that he was extremely elated as to the cooperation and assistance of all stations involved. Tom is used to handling emergency situations being a retired airline captain for 31 years as well as a certified flight instructor. He said he has practiced with emergency simulations so many times but when the real call comes in, it's a bit startling. As he put it, “when Mayday, Mayday is heard, it's almost surreal but the emergencies and training that we practice for here on the MMSN really pays off. The assistance of all the other operators really made this a true communications network. Thanks to all”

Network Manager Jeff Savasta, KB4JKL commented that “The Maritime Mobile Service Network is a totally free service that monitors 14.300 Mhz from 1200 to 2200 hours Eastern time, 365 days a year. While other governmental and private communications agencies have ceased the monitoring of HF frequencies in favor of satellite technologies, these services tend to be extremely expensive for the common small ocean going mariner. There are other nets on Amateur and non amateur frequencies for mariners but the MMSN provides a 10 hours daily continual monitoring for Mariners. The MMSN is always ready to handle emergencies but also handles routine communications for these boaters such as messages to family members.. We are a soothing voice on the other end of the mic for these boaters and as many have said “we are a lifeline to them on a mighty big lonely ocean”