



TECHNICAL CIRCULAR No. 934 of 6th August 2026

To	All Surveyors/Auditors. All flags
Title	Digital Technology for (VHF) Voice Communications
Reference	MSC 109

Development of a Transition Scheme for the Introduction of Digital Technology for Very High Frequency (VHF) Voice Communications

The increasing reduction in the availability of voice channels in the VHF maritime mobile frequency band has led to congestion problems in recent years, particularly in densely populated maritime areas. Therefore, MSC 109 agreed to include an output on the development of a transition scheme for the introduction of digital technology for Very High Frequency (VHF) voice communications, with a target completion year of 2027.

At this session, the Sub-Committee finalized the draft MSC circular detailing the transition scheme for the introduction of digital VHF voice communications agreeing on the following key principles:

- Retaining existing analogue VHF channels 06, 13, 16, 75 and 76 and the existing assignments of channels 70 (DSC), AIS 1 (AIS-SART) and AIS 2 (AIS-SART) even after transition to digital technology for VHF voice communications to ensure the continuity of vital GMDSS distress, urgency, and safety communications.
- Identification of additional digital VHF channels within RR Appendix 18 in the existing frequency band allocated to the maritime mobile service.
- Keeping the financial burden on ships and shore-based authorities to a minimum during the implementation process.

REFERENCE:

- MSC 112 (December 2026)

ATTACHMENTS: No.

Kindest Regards,
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