



# Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Commandant (CG-5PC)  
Attn: Inspections and Compliance Directorate  
U.S. Coast Guard  
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## High Frequency Voice Distress Watchkeeping will cease at most locations on 7 February 2022

The U.S. Coast Guard will cease monitoring all High Frequency (HF) shortwave voice distress frequencies within the contiguous United States and Hawaii on 7 February 2022 at 0000 UTC. HF voice distress watchkeeping **will continue unaffected in Alaska and Guam**. HF watchkeeping on HF distress and safety digital selective calling (DSC) frequencies will continue at all locations.

The U.S. Coast Guard Communications Command (COMMCOM), which operates HF radio stations, has seen the steady decline of voice distress calls over the last two decades, and except for Alaska has not received a voice distress call within its area of responsibility in the last seven years. On 20 November 2020, the Coast Guard [sought comments in the Federal Register concerning this cessation](#), but received minimal response. The Coast Guard similarly [terminated all watchkeeping on the medium frequency radiotelephone distress frequency 2182 kHz](#) on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

On December 31<sup>st</sup> 2019, the Coast Guard Communications Detachment Kodiak received the F/V *Scandies Rose* distress call on 4125 kHz. For reasons such as this, the Coast Guard will continue existing HF voice distress watchkeeping in Alaska on three frequencies: 4125 kHz, 6215 kHz and 8291 kHz. Distress watchkeeping from Guam, currently on 6215 kHz from 0900-2100 UTC, and 12,290 from 2100-0900 UTC, will also continue.

The Coast Guard recommends ships operating outside Very High Frequency (VHF) range from shore be equipped with a low-cost Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Iridium LT-3100S terminal or Inmarsat-C terminal, or an HF single sideband radio equipped with DSC. All three systems are recognized internationally for providing immediate and reliable two-way distress communications.

Rescue 21 VHF distress watchkeeping on channel 16 and DSC is not affected by this announcement.

Questions concerning this notice may be forwarded to Coast Guard Spectrum Management and Communications Policy Division (CG-672) at [HQS-SMB-CG-672@USCG.MIL](mailto:HQS-SMB-CG-672@USCG.MIL) or to the [Coast Guard Navigation Center's "Contact Us" page](#) by selecting "Maritime Telecommunications" as subject.

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