

IMO STANDARD MARINE COMMUNICATION PHRASES



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Foreword

As navigational and safety communications from ship-to-shore and vice versa, from ship-to-ship, and on board ship must be precise, simple and unambiguous so as to avoid confusion and error, there is a need to standardize the language used. This is of particular importance in the light of the increasing number of internationally trading vessels with crews speaking many different languages, since problems of communication may cause misunderstandings leading to dangers to the vessel, the people on board and the environment.

In 1973, the Maritime Safety Committee agreed, at its twenty-seventh session, that where language difficulties arise a common language should be used for navigational purposes, and that language should be English. In consequence the Standard Marine Navigational Vocabulary (SMNV) was developed, adopted in 1977 and amended in 1985.

In 1992, the Maritime Safety Committee, at its sixtieth session, instructed the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation to develop a more comprehensive standardized safety language than SMNV 1985, taking into account the changing conditions in modern seafaring and covering all major safety-related verbal communications.

At its sixty-eighth session in 1997, the Maritime Safety Committee adopted the Draft IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) developed by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation. The draft IMO SMCP, following international trials, was amended at the forty-sixth session of this Sub-Committee, and was given final consideration by the Maritime Safety Committee at its seventy-fourth session in the light of remarks received by the Organization. The IMO SMCP was adopted by the Assembly in November 2001 as resolution A.918(22).

Under the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as revised 1995, the ability to use and understand the IMO SMCP is required for the certification of officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more.

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IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases

INTRODUCTION*

1 Position of the IMO SMCP in maritime practice

The IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) has been compiled:

- to assist in the greater safety of navigation and of the conduct of the ship,
- to standardize the language used in communication for navigation at sea, in port approaches, waterways and harbours, and on board vessels with multilingual crews, and
- to assist maritime training institutions in meeting the objectives mentioned above.

These phrases are not intended to supplant or contradict the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 or special local rules or recommendations made by IMO concerning ships' routing, neither are they intended to supersede the International Code of Signals, and their use in ship's external communications has to be in strict compliance with the relevant radiotelephone procedures as set out in the ITU Radio Regulations. Furthermore, the IMO SMCP, as a collection of individual phrases, should not be regarded as any kind of technical manual providing operational instructions.

The IMO SMCP meets the requirements of the STCW Convention, 1978, as revised, and of the SOLAS Convention, 1974, as revised, regarding verbal communications; moreover, the phrases cover the relevant communication safety aspects laid down in these Conventions.

Use of the IMO SMCP should be made as often as possible in preference to other wording of similar meaning; as a minimum requirement, users should adhere as closely as possible to them in relevant situations. In this way they are intended to become an acceptable safety language, using English for the verbal interchange of intelligence among individuals of all maritime nations on the many and varied occasions when precise meanings and translations are in doubt, as is increasingly evident under modern conditions at sea.

An accompanying CD[†] is designed to familiarize users with the pronunciation of the phrases.

* The phrases are annex 1 of resolution A.918(22) (see page 116).

† It is expected that this will be available towards the middle of 2003.

2 Organization of the IMO SMCP

The IMO SMCP is divided into External Communication Phrases and On-board Communication Phrases as far as its application is concerned, and into part A and part B as to its status within the framework of STCW 1978, as revised.

Part A covers phrases applicable in external communications, and may be regarded as the replacement of the Standard Marine Navigational Vocabulary 1985, which is required to be used and understood under the STCW Code, 1995, table A-II/1. This part is enriched by essential phrases concerning ship handling and safety of navigation to be used in on-board communications, particularly when the pilot is on the bridge, as required by regulation 14(4), chapter V, SOLAS 1974, as revised.

Part B calls attention to other on-board standard safety-related phrases which, supplementary to part A, may also be regarded as useful for maritime English instruction.

3 Position of the IMO SMCP in maritime education and training

The IMO SMCP is not intended to provide a comprehensive maritime English syllabus, which is expected to cover a far wider range of language skills to be achieved in the fields of vocabulary, grammar, discourse abilities, etc. than the IMO SMCP could ever manage. However, part A in particular should be an indispensable part of any curriculum which is designed to meet the corresponding requirements of the STCW Convention 1978, as revised. In addition, part B offers a rich choice of situations covered by phrases well suited to meet the communication requirements of the STCW Convention 1978, as revised, which mariners are implicitly expected to satisfy.

The IMO SMCP should be taught and learned selectively according to users' specific needs, rather than in its entirety. The respective instruction should be based on practice in the maritime environment, and should be implemented through appropriate modern language teaching methods.

4 Basic communicative features

The IMO SMCP builds on a basic knowledge of the English language. It was drafted intentionally in a simplified version of maritime English in order to reduce grammatical, lexical and idiomatic varieties to a tolerable minimum, using standardized structures for the sake of its function aspects, i.e. reducing misunderstanding in safety-related verbal communications, thereby endeavouring to reflect present maritime English language usage on board vessels and in ship-to-shore/ship-to-ship communications.

This means that in phrases offered for use in emergency and other situations developing under considerable pressure of time or psychological stress, as well as in navigational warnings, a block language is applied which uses sparingly or omits the function words *the, a/an, is/are*, as done in seafaring practice. Users, however, may be flexible in this respect.

Further communicative features may be summarized as follows:

- avoiding synonyms
- avoiding contracted forms
- providing fully worded answers to "yes/no" questions and basic alternative answers to sentence questions

- providing *one* phrase for *one* event, and
- structuring the corresponding phrases according to the principle: *identical invariable plus variable*.

5 Typographical conventions

()	brackets indicate that the part of the message enclosed within the brackets may be added where relevant;
/	oblique strokes indicate that the items on either side of the stroke are alternatives;
. . .	dots indicate that the relevant information is to be filled in where the dots occur;
(<i>italic letters</i>)	indicate the kind of information requested;
~	tildes precede possible words or phrases which can be used after/in association with the given standard phrase.

.....

GENERAL

1 Procedure

When it is necessary to indicate that the IMO SMCP are to be used, the following message may be sent:

“Please use IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases”

“I will use IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases”

2 Spelling

2.1 Spelling of letters

When spelling is necessary, only the following spelling table should be used:

Letter	Code	Letter	Code
A	<u>A</u> lfa	N	Nov <u>e</u> mber
B	<u>B</u> ravo	O	<u>O</u> scar
C	<u>C</u> harlie	P	<u>P</u> apa
D	<u>D</u> elta	Q	Que <u>b</u> ec
E	<u>E</u> cho	R	<u>R</u> omeo
F	<u>F</u> oxtrot	S	<u>S</u> ierra
G	G <u>o</u> lf	T	<u>T</u> ango
H	H <u>o</u> tel	U	<u>U</u> niform
I	<u>I</u> ndia	V	<u>V</u> ictor
J	<u>J</u> uliet	W	<u>W</u> hisky
K	<u>K</u> ilo	X	<u>X</u> -ray
L	<u>L</u> ima	Y	<u>Y</u> ankee
M	M <u>i</u> ke	Z	<u>Z</u> ulu

2.2 Spelling of digits and numbers

A few digits and numbers have a **modified** pronunciation compared to general English:

Number	Spelling	Pronunciation
0	zero	<u>Z</u> EERO
1	one	WUN
2	two	TOO
3	three	<u>T</u> REE
4	four	<u>F</u> OWER
5	five	FIFE
6	six	SIX
7	seven	SEVEN
8	eight	AIT
9	nine	<u>N</u> INER
1000	thousand	<u>T</u> OUSAND

3 Message markers

In shore-to-ship and ship-to-shore communication or radio communication in general, the following eight Message Markers may be used (also see “Application of Message Markers” given in part A1/6 “Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) Standard Phrases”):

- (i) Instruction
- (ii) Advice
- (iii) Warning
- (iv) Information
- (v) Question
- (vi) Answer
- (vii) Request
- (viii) Intention

4 Responses

4.1 When the answer to a question is in the affirmative, say:

“Yes . . . ” followed by the appropriate phrase in full.

4.2 When the answer to a question is in the negative, say:

“No . . . ” followed by the appropriate phrase in full.

4.3 When the information requested is not immediately available, say:

“Stand by . . . ” followed by the time interval within which the information will be available.

4.4 When the information requested cannot be obtained, say:

“No information”.

4.5 When an INSTRUCTION (e.g. by a VTS Station, naval vessel or other fully authorized personnel) or an ADVICE is given, respond if in the affirmative:

“I will / can . . . ” followed by the instruction or advice in full; and,

if in the negative, respond:

“I will not / cannot . . . ” followed by the instruction or advice in full.

Example: “ADVICE. Do not overtake the vessel to the north of you”.

Respond: “I will not overtake the vessel to the north of me”.

4.6 Responses to orders and answers to questions of special importance both in external and on-board communication are given in wording in the phrases concerned.

5 Distress, urgency and safety signals

5.1 MAYDAY to be used to announce a distress message

5.2 PAN PAN to be used to announce an urgency message

5.3 SECURITE to be used to announce a safety message

6 Standard organizational phrases

6.1 "How do you read (me)?"

6.1.1 "I read you . . .

bad/one	with signal strength one (i.e. barely perceptible)
poor/two	with signal strength two (i.e. weak)
fair/three	with signal strength three (i.e. fairly good)
good/four	with signal strength four (i.e. good)
excellent/five"	with signal strength five. (i.e. very good)

6.2 When it is advisable to remain on a VHF channel/frequency, say:

"Stand by on VHF channel . . . / frequency . . .".

6.2.1 When it is accepted to remain on the VHF channel/frequency indicated, say:

"Standing by on VHF channel . . . / frequency . . .".

6.3 When it is advisable to change to another VHF channel/frequency, say:

"Advise (you) change to VHF channel . . . / frequency . . .".

"Advise (you) try VHF channel . . . / frequency . . .".

6.3.1 When the changing of a VHF channel/frequency is accepted, say:

"Changing to VHF channel . . . / frequency . . .".

7 Corrections

When a mistake is made in a message, say:

"Mistake . . ." followed by the word:

"Correction . . ." plus the corrected part of the message.

Example: "My present speed is 14 knots – mistake.

Correction, my present speed is 12, one-two, knots."

8 Readiness

"I am / I am not ready to receive your message".

9 Repetition

9.1 If any part of the message is considered sufficiently important to need safeguarding, say:

"Repeat . . ." followed by the corresponding part of the message.

Example: "My draught is 12.6 repeat one-two decimal 6 metres".

"Do not overtake – repeat – do not overtake".

9.2 When a message is not properly heard, say:

"Say again (please)".

10 Numbers

Numbers are to be spoken in separate digits:

“One-five-zero” for 150.

“Two decimal five” or “Two point five” for 2.5.

Note: Attention! When rudder angles, e.g. in wheel orders, are given, say:

“Fifteen” for 15 or

“Twenty” for 20, etc.

11 Positions

- 11.1** When latitude and longitude are used, these shall be expressed in degrees and minutes (and decimals of a minute if necessary), north or south of the Equator and east or west of Greenwich.

Example: “WARNING. Dangerous wreck in position 15 degrees 34 minutes North 061 degrees 29 minutes West”.

- 11.2** When the position is related to a mark, the mark shall be a well-defined charted object. The bearing shall be in the 360 degrees notation from true North and shall be that of the position FROM the mark.

Example: “Your position bearing 137 degrees from Big Head lighthouse distance 2.4 nautical miles”.

12 Bearings

The bearing of the mark or vessel concerned is the bearing in the 360 degree notation from North (true North unless otherwise stated), except in the case of relative bearings. Bearings may be either FROM the mark or FROM the vessel.

Example: “Pilot boat is bearing 215 degrees from you”.

Note: Vessels reporting their position should always quote their bearing FROM the mark, as described in paragraph 11.2 of this section.

12.1 Relative bearings

Relative bearings can be expressed in degrees relative to the vessel's head. More frequently this is in relation to the port or starboard bow.

Example: “Buoy 030 degrees on your port bow”.

(Relative D/F bearings are more commonly expressed in the 360 degree notation.)

13 Courses

Always to be expressed in 360 degree notation from North (true North unless otherwise stated). Whether this is to TO or FROM a mark can be stated.

14 Distances

To be expressed in nautical miles or cables (tenths of a mile), the unit always to be stated.

15 Speed

To be expressed in knots:

15.1 “without further notation”, meaning speed through the water; or,

15.2 “ground speed”, meaning speed over the ground.

16 Times

Times should be expressed in the 24 hour UTC notation; if local time will be used in ports or harbours it should be clearly stated.

17 Geographical names

Place names used should be those on the chart or in Sailing Directions in use.

Should these not be understood, latitude and longitude should be given.

18 Ambiguous words

Some words in English have meanings depending on the context in which they appear. Misunderstandings frequently occur, especially in VTS communications, and have produced accidents. Such words are:

18.1 The conditionals “may”, “might”, “should” and “could”.

May

Do not say: “May I enter the fairway?”

Say: “QUESTION. Do I have permission to enter the fairway?”

Do not say: “You may enter the fairway”

Say: “ANSWER. You have permission to enter the fairway.”

Might

Do not say: “I might enter the fairway”

Say: “INTENTION. I will enter the fairway.”

Should

Do not say: “You should anchor in anchorage B 3”

Say: “ADVICE. Anchor in anchorage B 3.”

Could

Do not say: “You could be running into danger”

Say: “WARNING. You are running into danger.”

18.2 The word “can”.

The word “can” describes either the possibility or the capability of doing something. In the IMO SMCP the situations where phrases using the word “can” appear make it clear whether a possibility is referred to. In an ambiguous context, however, say, for example: “QUESTION. Do I have permission to use the shallow draught fairway at this time?” Do not say: “Can I use the shallow draught fairway at this time?” if you are asking for permission. (The same applies to the word “may”).

Note: In all cases the radiotelephone procedures as set out in the ITU Radio Regulations have to be observed.

1 General terms

Abandon vessel (to)	To evacuate crew and passengers from a vessel following a distress
Accommodation ladder	Ladder attached to platform at vessel's side with flat steps and handrails enabling persons to embark/disembark from water or shore
Adrift	Uncontrolled movement at sea under the influence of current, tide or wind
Air draught	The height from the waterline to the highest point of the vessel
Assembly station	Place on deck, in mess rooms, etc., assigned to crew and passengers where they have to meet according to the muster list when the corresponding alarm is released or announcement made
Backing (of wind)	Shift of wind direction in an anticlockwise manner, for example from north to west (opposite of veering)
Beach (to)	To run a vessel up on a beach to prevent its sinking in deep water
Berth	.1 A sea room to be kept for safety around a vessel, rock, platform, etc. .2 The place assigned to a vessel when anchored or lying alongside a pier, etc.
Blast	A whistle signal made by the vessel
Blind sector	An area which cannot be scanned by the ship's radar because it is shielded by parts of the superstructure, masts, etc.
Boarding arrangements	All equipment, such as pilot ladder, accommodation ladder, hoist, etc., necessary for a safe transfer of the pilot
Boarding speed	The speed of a vessel adjusted to that of a pilot boat at which the pilot can safely embark/disembark
Bob-cat	A mini-caterpillar with push-blade used for the careful distribution of loose goods in cargo holds of bulk carriers
Briefing	Concise explanatory information to crew and/or passengers

Cable	.1 Chain connecting a vessel to the anchor(s) .2 Wire or rope primarily used for mooring a ship .3 (Measurement) one hundred fathoms or one tenth of a nautical mile
Capsize (to)	To turn over
Cardinal buoy	A seamark, i.e. a buoy, indicating the north, east, south or west, i.e. the cardinal points from a fixed point such as a wreck, shallow water, banks, etc.
Cardinal points	The four main points of the compass: north, east, south and west
Casualty	Here: case of death in an accident or shipping disaster
Check (to)	.1 To make sure that equipment etc. is in proper condition or that everything is correct and safe .2 To regulate motion of a cable, rope or wire when it is running out too fast
Close-coupled towing	A method of towing vessels through polar ice by means of ice-breaking tugs with a special stern notch suited to receive and hold the bow of the vessel to be towed
Close up (to)	To decrease the distance to the vessel ahead by increasing one's own speed
Compatibility (of goods)	Indicates whether different goods can be safely stowed together in one cargo space or in an adjacent hold
Convoy	A group of vessels which sail together, e.g. through a canal or ice
Course	The intended direction of movement of a vessel through the water
Course made good	That course which a vessel makes good over ground, after allowing for the effect of currents, tidal streams, and leeway caused by wind and sea
COW	Crude Oil Washing: a system of cleaning the cargo tanks by washing them with the cargo of crude oil during discharge
CPA/TCPA	Closest Point of Approach/Time to Closest Point of Approach: limit as defined by the observer to give warning when a tracked target or targets will close to within these limits
Crash-stop	An emergency reversal operation of the main engine(s) to avoid a collision
Damage control team	A group of crew members trained for fighting flooding in the vessel

Datum	.1 The most probable position of a search target at a given time .2 The plane of reference to which all data as to the depth on charts are referenced
Derelict	Vessel still afloat, abandoned at sea
Destination	Port for which a vessel is bound
Disabled	A vessel damaged or impaired in such a manner as to be incapable of proceeding on its voyage
Disembark (to)	To go from a vessel
Distress alert (GMDSS)	A radio signal from a distressed vessel automatically directed to an MRCC giving position, identification, course and speed of the vessel as well as the nature of distress
Distress/Urgency traffic	Here: the verbal exchange of information on radio from ship-to-shore and/or ship-to-ship/aircraft about a distress/urgency situation as defined in the relevant ITU Radio Regulations
Draught (or draft)	Depth in water at which a vessel floats
Dragging (of anchor)	Moving of an anchor over the sea-bottom involuntarily because it is no longer preventing the movement of the vessel
Dredging (of anchor)	Moving of an anchor over the sea-bottom to control the movement of the vessel
Drifting	Being driven along by the wind, tide or current
Drop back (to)	To increase the distance from the vessel ahead by reducing one's own speed
DSC	Digital Selective Calling (in the GMDSS system)
Elongated spreader	Here: step of a pilot ladder which prevents the ladder from twisting
Embark (to)	To go aboard a vessel
EPIRB	Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon
Escape route	A clearly marked way in the vessel which has to be followed in case of an emergency
Escort	Attending a vessel to be available in case of need, e.g. ice-breaker, tug, etc.
ETA	Estimated Time of Arrival
ETD	Estimated Time of Departure
Fathom	A measure of 6 feet

Fire patrol	A member of the watch going around the vessel at certain intervals so that an outbreak of fire may be promptly detected; mandatory in vessels carrying more than 36 passengers
Flooding	Major uncontrolled flow of seawater into the vessel
Fire monitor	Fixed foam/powder/water cannon shooting fire-extinguishing agents on tank deck, manifold, etc.
Foul (of anchor)	Anchor has its own cable twisted around it or has fouled an obstruction
Foul (of propeller)	A line, wire, net, etc., is wound round the propeller
Full speed	Highest possible speed of a vessel
Fumes	Often harmful gas produced by fires, chemicals, fuel, etc.
General emergency alarm	A sound signal of seven short blasts and one prolonged blast given with the vessel's sound system
Give way	To keep out of the way of another vessel
GMDSS	Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
(D)GPS	(Differential) Global (satellite) Positioning System
Half cardinal points	The four main points lying between the cardinal points: north east, south east, south west and north west
Hampered vessel	A vessel restricted by her ability to manoeuvre by the nature of her work
Hatchrails	Ropes supported by stanchions around an open hatch to prevent persons from falling into a hold
Heading	The horizontal direction of the vessel's bows at a given moment measured in degrees clockwise from north
Hoist	Here: a cable used by helicopters for lifting or lowering persons in a pick-up operation
Icing	Coating of ice on an object, e.g. the mast or superstructure of a vessel
IMO class	Group of dangerous or hazardous goods, harmful substances or marine pollutants in sea transport as classified in the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (IMDG Code)
Inert (to)	To reduce the oxygen in a tank by inert gas to avoid an explosive atmosphere

Initial course	Course directed by the On-Scene Co-ordinator or other authorized person to be steered at the beginning of a search
Inoperative	Not functioning
Jettison (to) (of cargo)	To throw goods overboard in order to lighten the vessel or improve its stability in case of an emergency
Launch (to)	To lower, e.g. lifeboats, to the water
Leaking	Escape of liquids such as water, oil, etc., out of pipes, boilers, tanks, etc., or a minor inflow of seawater into the vessel due to damage to the hull
Leeward	On or towards the sheltered side of a ship; opposite of windward
Leeway	Vessel's sideways drift leeward of the desired course
Let go (to)	To set free, let loose, or cast off (of anchors, lines, etc.)
Lifeboat station	Place assigned to crew and passengers to muster before being ordered into the lifeboats
List	Here: inclination of the vessel to port side or starboard side
Located	In navigational warnings: position of object confirmed
Make water (to)	To have seawater flowing into the vessel due to hull damage, or hatches awash and not properly closed
MMSI	Maritime Mobile Service Identity number
Moor (to)	To secure a vessel in a particular place by means of wires or ropes made fast to the shore, to anchors, or to anchored mooring buoys, or to ride with both anchors down
MRCC	Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre: land-based authority responsible for promoting efficient organization of maritime search and rescue and for co-ordinating the conduct of search and rescue operations within a search and rescue region
Muster (to)	To assemble crew, passengers or both in a special place for purposes of checking
Muster list	List of crew, passengers and others on board and their functions in a distress or drill
Not under command	(abbr. NUC): a vessel which through exceptional circumstances is unable to manoeuvre as required by the COLREGs
Obstruction	An object such as a wreck, net, etc., which blocks a fairway, route, etc.



Off air	When the transmissions of a radio station, etc., have broken down, been switched off or suspended
Off station (of buoys)	Not in charted position
Oil clearance	Oil skimming from the surface of the water
Operational	Ready for immediate use
Ordnance exercise	Naval firing practice
OSC	On-Scene Co-ordinator: A person designated to co-ordinate search and rescue operations within a specified area
Overflow	Escape of oil or liquid from a tank because of a two-fold condition as a result of overflowing, thermal expansion, change in vessel trim or vessel movement
Polluter	A vessel emitting harmful substances into the air or spilling oil into the sea
Preventers	Ropes or wires attached to derricks to prevent them from swinging during cargo handling operations
Proceed (to)	To sail or head for a certain position or to continue with the voyage
PA-system	Public address system: loudspeakers in the vessel's cabins, messrooms, etc., and on deck through which important information can be broadcast from a central point, mostly from the navigation bridge
Recover (to)	Here: to pick up shipwrecked persons
Refloat (to)	To pull a vessel off after grounding; to set afloat again
Rendezvous	An appointment between vessels normally made on radio to meet in a certain area or position
Reported	In navigational warnings: position of object unconfirmed
Restricted area	A deck, space, area, etc., in vessels where, for safety reasons, entry is only permitted for authorized crew members
Resume (to)	Here: to re-start a voyage, service or search
Retreat signal	Sound, visual or other signal to a team ordering it to return to its base
Rig move	The movement of an oil rig, drilling platform, etc., from one position to another
Roll call	The act of checking how many passengers and crew members are present, e.g. at assembly stations, by reading aloud a list of their names

Safe speed	That speed of a vessel allowing time for effective action to be taken under prevailing circumstances and conditions to avoid a collision and to be stopped within an appropriate distance
SWL	Safe working load: maximum working load of lifting equipment that should not be exceeded
Safe working pressure	The maximum permissible pressure in cargo hoses
SAR	Search and Rescue
SART	Search and Rescue Transponder
Scene	The area or location where the event, e.g. an accident, has happened
Search pattern	A pattern according to which vessels and/or aircraft may conduct a co-ordinated search (the IMOSAR offers seven search patterns)
Search speed	The speed of searching vessels directed by the OSC
Seamark	A navigational aid placed to act as a beacon or warning
Segregation (of goods)	Separation of goods which for different reasons must not be stowed together
Shackle	.1 Length of chain cable measuring 15 fathoms .2 U-shaped link closed with a pin used for connecting purposes
Shifting cargo	Transverse movement of cargo, especially bulk cargo, caused by rolling or a heavy list
Slings	Ropes, nets, and any other means for handling general cargoes
Speed of advance	The speed at which a storm centre moves
Spill	The accidental escape of oil, etc., from a vessel, container, etc., into the sea
Spill control gear	Anti-pollution equipment for combating accidental spills of oils or chemicals
Stand by (to)	To be in readiness or prepared to execute an order; to be readily available
Stand clear (to)	Here: to keep a boat away from the vessel
Standing orders	Orders of the Master to the officer of the watch which he/she must comply with
Stand on (to)	To maintain course and speed
Station	The allotted place or the duties of each person on board
Stripping	Final pumping of tank's residues

Survivor	A person who continues to live in spite of being in an extremely dangerous situation, e.g. a shipping disaster.
Take off (to)	To lift off from a vessel's deck (helicopter)
Target	The echo generated, e.g. by a vessel, on a radar screen
Tension winch	A winch which applies tension to mooring lines to keep them tight
TEU	Twenty Foot Equivalent Unit (standard container dimension)
Track	The path followed, or to be followed, between one position and another
Transit	Here: the passage of a vessel through a canal, fairway, etc.
Transit speed	Speed of a vessel required for passage through a canal, fairway, etc.
Transshipment (of cargo)	Here: the transfer of goods from one vessel to another outside harbours
Under way	Describes a vessel which is not at anchor, or made fast to the shore, or aground
Union purchase	A method of cargo handling by combining two derricks, one of which is fixed over the hatch, the other over the ship's side
Unlit	When the light of a buoy or a lighthouse is inoperative
UTC	Universal Time Co-ordinated (GMT)
Variable (of winds)	A wind that is constantly changing speed and direction
Veering (of winds)	Clockwise change in the direction of the wind; opposite of backing
Veer out (to) (of anchors)	To let out a greater length of cable
(Vessel) constrained by her draught	A vessel severely restricted by her draught in her ability to deviate from the course followed in relation to the available depth and width of navigable water
VHF	Very High Frequency (30–300 MHz)
Walk out (to) (of anchors)	To reverse the action of a windlass to lower the anchor until it is clear of the hawse pipe and ready for dropping
Walk back (to)	To reverse the action of a windlass to ease the cable (of anchors)
Waypoint	A position a vessel has to pass or at which she has to alter course according to her voyage plan
Windward	The general direction from which the wind blows; opposite of leeward

Wreck A vessel which has been destroyed, sunk or abandoned at sea

2 VTS special terms

Fairway Navigable part of a waterway

Fairway speed Mandatory speed in a fairway

ITZ Inshore Traffic Zone (of a TSS): A routing measure comprising a designated area between the landward boundary of a TSS and the adjacent coast

Manoeuvring speed A vessel's reduced speed in circumstances where it may be required to use the engines at short notice

Receiving point A mark or place at which a vessel comes under obligatory entry, transit, or escort procedure

Reference line A line displayed on the radar screens in VTS Centres and/or electronic sea-charts separating the fairway for inbound and outbound vessels so that they can safely pass each other

Reporting point A mark or position at which a vessel is required to report to the local VTS station to establish its position

Separation zone/line A zone or line separating the traffic lanes in which vessels are proceeding in opposite or nearly opposite directions; or separating a traffic lane from the adjacent sea area; or separating traffic lanes designated for particular classes of vessels proceeding in the same direction

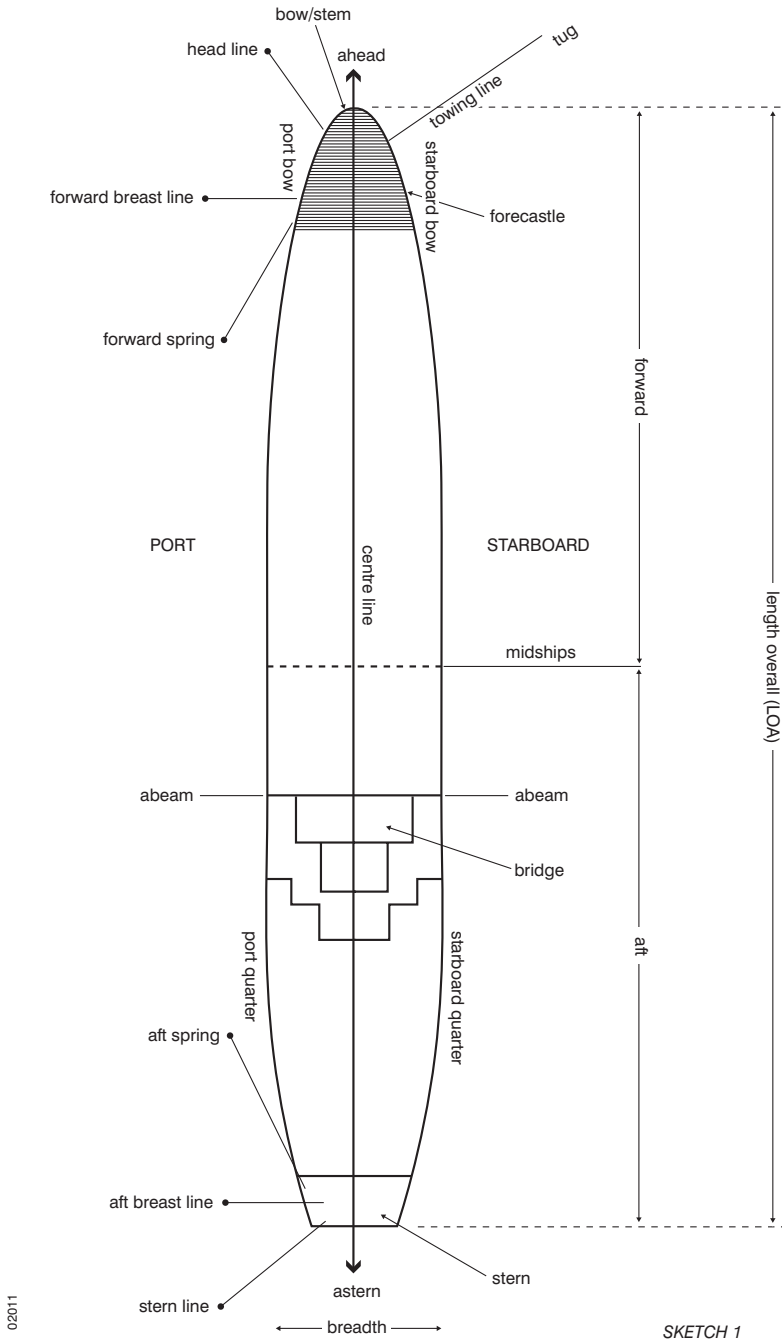
Traffic clearance VTS authorization for a vessel to proceed under conditions specified

Traffic lane An area within defined limits in which one-way traffic is established

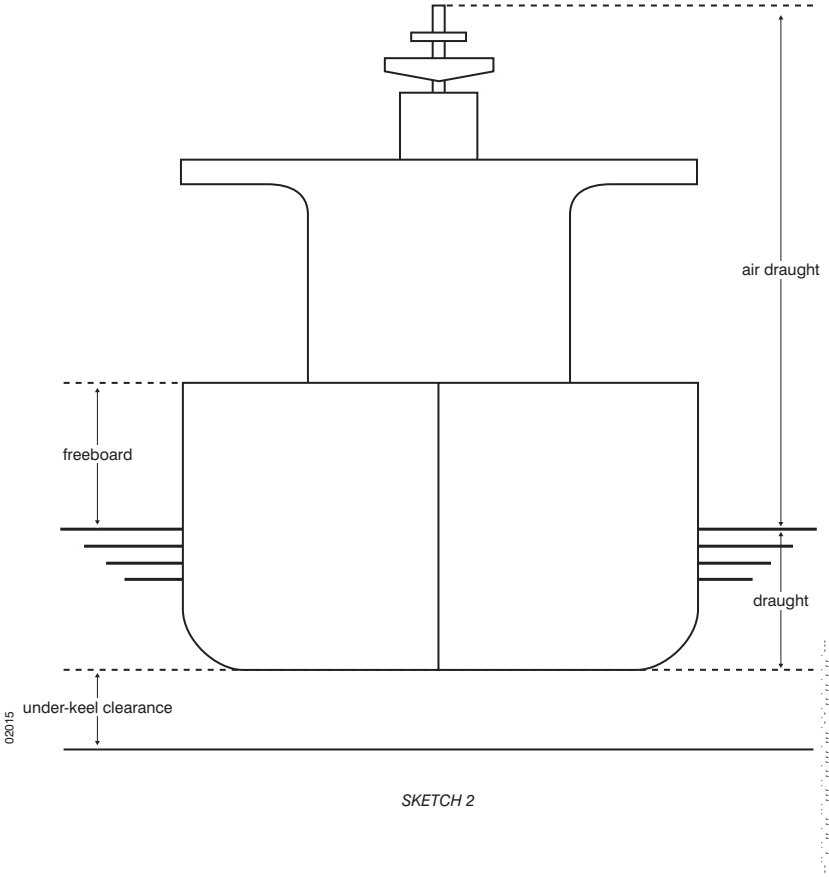
TSS Traffic Separation Scheme: a routing measure aimed at the separation of opposing streams of traffic by appropriate means and by the establishment of traffic lanes

VTS Vessel Traffic Services: services designed to improve the safety and efficiency of vessel traffic and to protect the environment

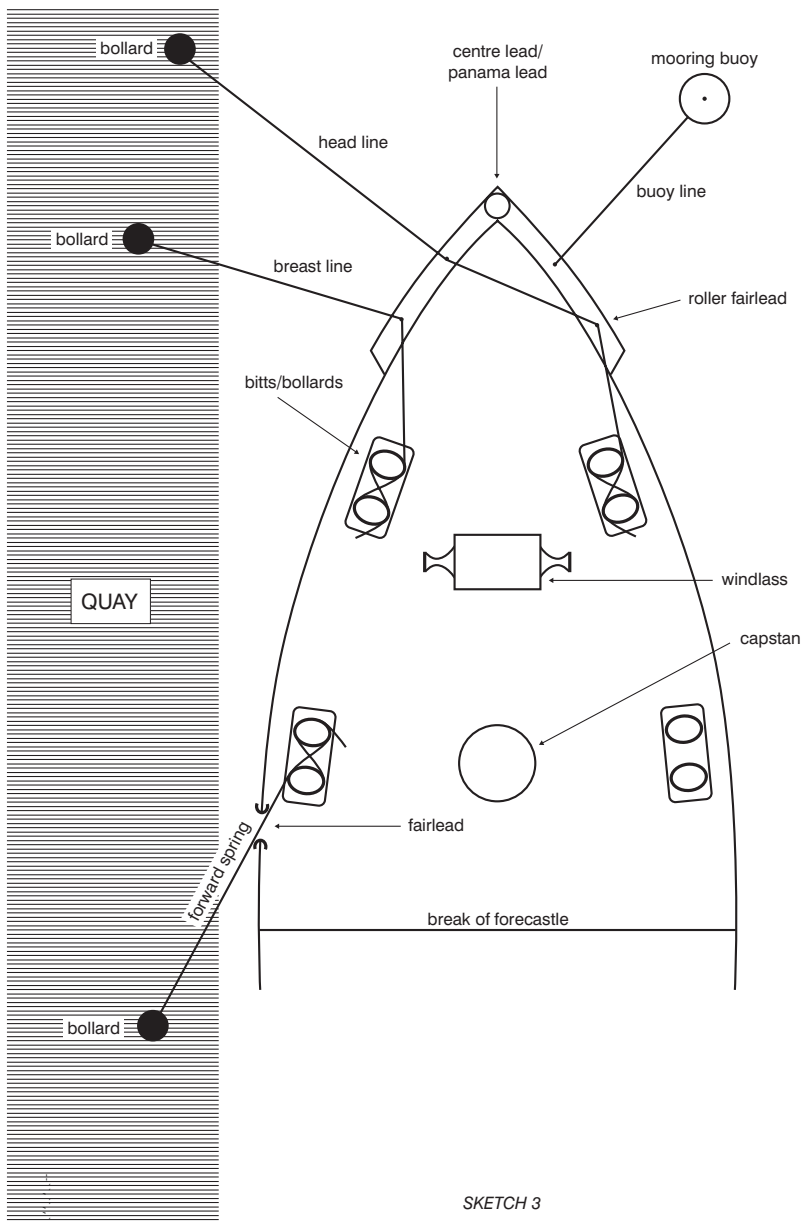
VTS area Area controlled by a VTS centre or VTS station



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SKETCH 2



IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases

Part A

Part A covers phrases applicable in external communications from ship to shore, shore to ship and ship to ship as required by STCW 1978, as revised, table A-II/1, as well as phrases applicable on board vessels in conversations between pilots and bridge teams as required by regulation 14(4) of chapter V of SOLAS 1974, as revised.

A1

External communication phrases

Attention: The use of Standard Phrases in vessels' external communications does not in any way exempt from application of the radiotelephone procedures as set out in the ITU Radio Regulations.

A1/1 Distress traffic

The distress traffic controlling station/other stations may impose radio silence on any interfering stations by using the term "Seelonce Mayday / Distress", **unless the latter have messages about the distress.**

● A1/1.1 Distress communications

Note: A distress traffic always has to commence with stating the position of the vessel in distress as specified in "GENERAL 11 Positions / 12 Bearings" if it is not included in the DSC distress alert.

● A1/1.1.1 Fire, explosion

- A1/1.1.1.1 I am / MV ... on fire (– after explosion)
- A1/1.1.1.2 Where is the fire?
 - A1/1.1.1.2.1 Fire is
 - ~ on deck
 - ~ in engine-room
 - ~ in hold(s)
 - ~ in superstructure / accommodation / ...
- A1/1.1.1.3 Are dangerous goods on fire?
- A1/1.1.1.3.1 Yes, dangerous goods are on fire
- A1/1.1.1.3.2 No, dangerous goods are not on fire
- A1/1.1.1.4 Is there danger of explosion?
- A1/1.1.1.4.1 Yes, danger of explosion
- A1/1.1.1.4.2 No danger of explosion
- A1/1.1.1.5 I am / MV ... not under command
- A1/1.1.1.6 Is the fire under control?
 - A1/1.1.1.6.1 Yes, fire is under control
 - A1/1.1.1.6.2 No, fire is not under control
- A1/1.1.1.7 What kind of assistance is required?
- A1/1.1.1.7.1 I do not / MV ... does not require assistance.
- A1/1.1.1.7.2 I require / MV ... requires
 - ~ fire-fighting assistance
 - ~ breathing apparatus – smoke is toxic
 - ~ foam extinguishers / CO₂ extinguishers
 - ~ fire pumps
 - ~ medical assistance / ...

- A1/1.1.1.8 Report injured persons
 A1/1.1.1.8.1 No persons injured.
 A1/1.1.1.8.2 Number of injured persons / casualties: ...

● **A1/1.1.2** **Flooding**

- A1/1.1.2.1 I am / MV ... is flooding below waterline / in the engine-room / in the hold(s)
 A1/1.1.2.2 I / MV ... cannot control flooding
 A1/1.1.2.3 What kind of assistance is required?
 A1/1.1.2.3.1 I require / MV ... requires pumps / divers / ...
 A1/1.1.2.3.2 I will send pumps / divers / ...
 A1/1.1.2.3.3 I cannot send pumps / divers / ...
 A1/1.1.2.4 I have / MV ... has dangerous list to port side / starboard
 A1/1.1.2.5 I am / MV ... in critical condition
 A1/1.1.2.6 Flooding is under control
 A1/1.1.2.7 I / MV ... can proceed without assistance
 A1/1.1.2.8 I require / MV ... requires escort / tug assistance / ...

● **A1/1.1.3** **Collision**

- A1/1.1.3.1 I have / MV ... has collided
 ~ with MV ...
 ~ with unknown vessel / object / ...
 ~ with ... (name) light vessel
 ~ with seamark ... (charted name)
 ~ with iceberg / ...
 A1/1.1.3.2 Report damage
 A1/1.1.3.2.1 I have / MV ... has damage above / below waterline
 A1/1.1.3.2.2 I am / MV ... not under command
 A1/1.1.3.2.3 I / MV ... cannot establish damage
 A1/1.1.3.2.4 I / MV ... cannot repair damage
 A1/1.1.3.2.5 I / MV ... can only proceed at slow speed
 A1/1.1.3.3 What kind of assistance is required?
 A1/1.1.3.3.1 I require / MV ... requires escort / tug assistance / ...

● **A1/1.1.4** **Grounding**

- A1/1.1.4.1 I am / MV ... aground
 A1/1.1.4.2 I require / MV ... requires tug assistance / pumps / ...
 A1/1.1.4.3 What part of your vessel is aground?
 A1/1.1.4.3.1 Aground forward / amidships / aft / full length
 A1/1.1.4.3.2 I cannot establish which part is aground
 A1/1.1.4.4 Warning. Uncharted rocks in position ...
 A1/1.1.4.5 Risk of grounding at low water
 A1/1.1.4.6 I / MV ... will jettison cargo to refloat
 A1/1.1.4.6.1 Warning! Do not jettison IMO class cargo!
 A1/1.1.4.7 When do you / does MV ... expect to refloat?
 A1/1.1.4.7.1 I expect / MV ... expects to refloat
 ~ at ... hours UTC
 ~ when tide rises
 ~ when weather improves
 ~ when draught decreases
 ~ with tug assistance / ...

- A1/1.1.4.8 Can you / can MV ... beach?
 A1/1.1.4.8.1 I / MV ... can / will beach in position ...
 A1/1.1.4.8.2 I / MV ... cannot beach
- **A1/1.1.5** **List – danger of capsizing**
 A1/1.1.5.1 I have / MV ... has dangerous list to port / starboard
 A1/1.1.5.2 I / MV ... will
 ~ transfer cargo / bunkers to stop listing
 ~ jettison cargo to stop listing
 A1/1.1.5.3 I am / MV ... in danger of capsizing (list increasing)
- **A1/1.1.6** **Sinking**
 A1/1.1.6.1 I am / MV ... sinking after collision / grounding / flooding / explosion / ...
 A1/1.1.6.2 I require / MV ... requires assistance
 A1/1.1.6.3 I am / MV ... proceeding to your assistance
 A1/1.1.6.4 ETA at distress position within ... hours / at ... hours UTC
- **A1/1.1.7** **Disabled and adrift**
 A1/1.1.7.1 I am / MV ...
 ~ not under command
 ~ adrift
 ~ drifting at ... knots to ... (*cardinal/half cardinal points*)
 ~ drifting into danger
 A1/1.1.7.2 I require / MV ... requires tug assistance
- **A1/1.1.8** **Armed attack/piracy**
 A1/1.1.8.1 I am / MV ... under attack by pirates
 A1/1.1.8.1.1 I / MV ... was under attack by pirates
 A1/1.1.8.2 I require / MV ... requires assistance
 A1/1.1.8.3 What kind of assistance is required?
 A1/1.1.8.3.1 I require / MV ... requires
 ~ medical assistance
 ~ navigational assistance
 ~ military assistance
 ~ tug assistance
 ~ escort / ...
 A1/1.1.8.4 Report damage
 A1/1.1.8.4.1 I have / MV ... has
 ~ no damage
 ~ damage to navigational equipment / ...
 A1/1.1.8.4.2 I am / MV ... not under command
 A1/1.1.8.5 Can you / can MV ... proceed?
 A1/1.1.8.5.1 Yes, I / MV ... can proceed
 A1/1.1.8.5.2 No, I / MV ... cannot proceed
- **A1/1.1.9** **Undesignated distress**
 A1/1.1.9.1 I have / MV ... has problems with cargo / engine(s) / navigation / ...
 A1/1.1.9.2 I require / MV ... requires ...

- **A1/1.1.10** **Abandoning vessel**
 A1/1.1.10.1 I / crew of MV ... must abandon vessel ... after explosion / collision / grounding / flooding / piracy / armed attack / ...
- **A1/1.1.11** **Person overboard**
 A1/1.1.11.1 I have / MV ... has lost person(s) overboard in position ...
 A1/1.1.11.2 Assist with search in vicinity of position ...
 A1/1.1.11.3 All vessels in vicinity of position ... keep sharp look-out and report to ...
 A1/1.1.11.4 I am / MV ... is proceeding for assistance. ETA at ... hours UTC / within ... hours
 A1/1.1.11.5 Search in vicinity of position ...
 A1/1.1.11.5.1 I am / MV ... is searching in vicinity of position ...
 A1/1.1.11.6 Aircraft ETA at ... hours UTC / within ... hours to assist in search
 A1/1.1.11.7 Can you continue search?
 A1/1.1.11.7.1 Yes, I can continue search
 A1/1.1.11.7.2 No, I cannot continue search
 A1/1.1.11.8 Stop search
 A1/1.1.11.8.1 Return to ...
 A1/1.1.11.8.2 Proceed with your voyage
 A1/1.1.11.9 What is the result of search?
 A1/1.1.11.9.1 The result of search is negative
 A1/1.1.11.10 I / MV ... located / picked up person(s) in position ...
 A1/1.1.11.11 Person picked up is crew member / passenger of MV ...
 A1/1.1.11.12 What is condition of person(s)?
 A1/1.1.11.12.1 Condition of person(s) bad / good
 A1/1.1.11.12.2 Person(s) dead
- **A1/1.2** **Search and rescue communication**
- **A1/1.2.1** **SAR communications**
 (specifying or supplementary to A1/1.1)
 A1/1.2.1.1 I require / MV ... requires assistance
 A1/1.2.1.2 I am / MV ... proceeding to your assistance
 A1/1.2.1.3 What is your MMSI number?
 A1/1.2.1.3.1 My MMSI number is ...
 A1/1.2.1.4 What is your position?
 A1/1.2.1.4.1 My position ...
 A1/1.2.1.5 What is your present course and speed?
 A1/1.2.1.5.1 My present course ... degrees, my speed ... knots
 A1/1.2.1.6 Report number of persons on board
 A1/1.2.1.6.1 Number of persons on board: ...
 A1/1.2.1.7 Report injured persons
 A1/1.2.1.7.1 No person injured
 A1/1.2.1.7.2 Number of injured persons / casualties: ...
 A1/1.2.1.8 Will you abandon vessel?
 A1/1.2.1.8.1 I will not abandon vessel
 A1/1.2.1.8.2 I will abandon vessel at ... hours UTC
 A1/1.2.1.9 Is your EPIRB / SART transmitting?
 A1/1.2.1.9.1 Yes, my EPIRB / SART is transmitting
 A1/1.2.1.9.2 Yes, my EPIRB / SART is transmitting by mistake

- A1/1.2.1.10 Did you transmit a DSC distress alert?
 A1/1.2.1.10.1 Yes, I transmitted a DSC alert
 A1/1.2.1.10.2 Yes, I transmitted a DSC alert by mistake
 A1/1.2.1.11 How many lifeboats / liferafts (with how many persons) will you launch?
 A1/1.2.1.11.1 I will launch ... lifeboats / liferafts (with ... persons)
 A1/1.2.1.12 How many persons will stay on board?
 A1/1.2.1.12.1 No person will stay on board
 A1/1.2.1.12.2 ... persons will stay on board
 A1/1.2.1.13 What is the weather situation in your position?
 A1/1.2.1.13.1 Wind ... (*cardinal/half cardinal points*) force Beaufort ...
 A1/1.2.1.13.2 Visibility good / moderate / poor
 A1/1.2.1.13.3 Smooth / moderate / rough / high sea – slight / moderate / heavy swell ... (*cardinal/half cardinal points*)
 A1/1.2.1.13.4 Current ... knots, to ... (*cardinal/half cardinal points*)
 A1/1.2.1.14 Are there dangers to navigation?
 A1/1.2.1.14.1 No dangers to navigation
 A1/1.2.1.14.2 Warning! Uncharted rocks / ice / abnormally low tides / mines / ...
- **A1/1.2.2 *Acknowledgement and/or relay of SAR messages***
 A1/1.2.2.1 Received MAYDAY from MV ... at ... hours UTC on VHF channel ... / frequency ...
 A1/1.2.2.2 Vessel in position ...
 ~ on fire
 ~ had explosion
 ~ flooded
 ~ in collision (with ...)
 ~ listing / in danger of capsizing
 ~ sinking
 ~ disabled and adrift
 ~ abandoned / ...
 A1/1.2.2.3 Vessel requires assistance
 A1/1.2.2.4 Received your MAYDAY
 A1/1.2.2.4.1 My position ...
 A1/1.2.2.4.2 I / MV ... will proceed to your assistance
 A1/1.2.2.4.3 ETA at distress position within ... hours / at ... hours UTC
- **A1/1.2.3 *Performing/co-ordinating SAR operations***
 The questions are normally asked and advice given by the On-Scene Co-ordinator (OSC).
 For further information see *IAMSAR Manual*, London/Montreal, 1998
 A1/1.2.3.1 I will act as On-Scene Co-ordinator
 A1/1.2.3.1.1 I will show following signals / lights: ...
 A1/1.2.3.2 Can you proceed to distress position?
 A1/1.2.3.2.1 Yes, I can proceed to distress position
 A1/1.2.3.2.2 No, I cannot proceed to distress position
 A1/1.2.3.3 What is your ETA at distress position?
 A1/1.2.3.3.1 My ETA at distress position within ... hours / at ... hours UTC
 A1/1.2.3.4 MAYDAY position is not correct