



Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Maritime Safety Information



HM Coastguard

Her Majesty's Coastguard is responsible in the UK for the broadcast of Maritime Safety Information (MSI) on NAVTEX, VHF and MF and for providing the Radio Medical Advice Link Call (MEDILINK) Service.

COVERAGE

The primary method of disseminating MSI is by NAVTEX which provides coverage out to 270 miles. This service is complemented by radio telephony broadcasts. HM Coastguard provides VHF coverage out to 30 miles and MF coverage out to 150 miles using its network of remote aerial sites around the UK coast.

NAVTEX

Maritime Safety Information and additional weather information is transmitted by NAVTEX on 518 kHz in English at the following times:

CULLERCOATS – 518 kHz (G)

Gale warnings – when received and at:	0100, 0500, 0900, 1300, 1700, 2100
24 hour forecast and outlook	0900, 2100
Extended outlook (3-5 days)	0100
WZ navigation warnings	0100, 0500, 0900, 1300, 1700, 2100
Tidal surge warnings –	When received
Navarea one warnings	0500, 1700

NITON – 518 kHz (E)

Gale warnings – when received and at:	0040, 0440, 0840, 1240, 1640, 2040
24 hour forecast and outlook	0840, 2040
Extended outlook (3-5 days)	0040
WZ navigation warnings	0040, 0440, 0840, 1240, 1640, 2040
Tidal surge warnings	When received
SUBFACTS	0440, 1640
Navarea One Warnings	0440, 1640

PORTPATRICK - 518 kHz (O)

Gale warnings – when received and at:	0220, 0620, 1020, 1420, 1820, 2220
24 hour forecast and outlook	0620, 1820
Extended outlook (3-5 days)	0220
WZ navigation warnings	0220, 0620, 1020, 1420, 1820, 2220
Tidal surge warnings	On receipt
SUBFACTS	0620, 1820
Navarea one warnings	0220, 1420

OSTENDE - 518 kHz (T)

Gale warnings (Dover & Thames)	0310, 0710, 1110, 1510, 1910, 2310
Weather forecast	0710, 1910

OSTENDE - 518 kHz (M)

WZ navigation warnings	0200, 0600, 1000, 1400, 1800, 2200
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MALIN HEAD - 518 kHz (Q)

Gale warnings (Irish Sea, Shannon, Rockall, Malin and Bailey)	0240, 0640, 1040, 1440, 1840, 2240
Gale warnings and 24 Hour forecast – Shannon, Rockall, Malin and Bailey	0640, 1840
WZ navigation warnings for North Channel, SW Coast of Scotland, N, NW and W coasts of Ireland and approaches.	0240, 0640, 1440, 1840

INSHORE WATERS FORECASTS AND STRONG WIND WARNINGS

The 490 kHz NAVTEX service provides the inshore waters forecast (IWF) and also strong wind warning (SWW) when received. Current weather observations are broadcast once only at the next available broadcast schedule as shown below:

CULLERCOATS - 490 kHz (U)

Inshore forecast - Areas 1 to 5 and 18	0720, 1920
Current weather observations – Eastern coastal areas	0320, 1120, 1520, 2320

NITON - 490 kHz (I)

Inshore forecast - Areas 5 to 9 and 19	0520, 1720
Current weather observations – South coastal areas and English Channel	0120, 0920, 1320, 2120

PORTPATRICK - 490 kHz (C)

Inshore Forecast - Areas 9 - 17	0820, 2020
Current weather observations – Western coastal areas	0020, 0420, 1220, 1620

Malin Head – 490 kHz (A)

Inshore forecast – Areas 13 to 17	0000, 0400, 0800, 1200, 1600, 2000
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Note: NAVTEX provides information for its own area of coverage only. Make sure that you select the appropriate B1 transmitter identity for the area you are travelling towards as well as the area that you are currently operating in. You must also make sure that the B2 subject indicator is set to 'V' in order to receive 490 data from UK sites. As well as the UK NAVTEX transmitters, in some locations, the service is well served by foreign NAVTEX transmitters broadcasting the 518 service in English.

RADIO TELEPHONY BROADCASTS

Full MSI broadcasts will be made by radio telephony (R/T) twice a day from each of HM Coastguard's Maritime Rescue Coordination

Centres (MRCCs). A new inshore waters forecast and any gale warnings will be broadcast every six hours and will be repeated together with any strong wind warnings three hours later.

The broadcast times shown in the schedules are in local time.

The broadcast of MSI may be interrupted or delayed as a result of search and rescue (SAR) operations.

CAUTION

Maritime safety information is pre-recorded, often by different coastguard officers with different regional accents. This does not mean that you are receiving transmissions from different locations.

FREQUENCIES

MSI is broadcast on VHF channels 23, 84 or 86, (or exceptionally on channel 10). This prevents interference and allows one MRCC to broadcast simultaneously on two or more aerials. Because of the length of some broadcasts, this system minimises the delay in transmitting the information to all mariners.

NAVIGATIONAL WARNINGS

Navigational warnings (WZ) are provided by the UK Hydrographic Office. The primary means of disseminating this information is by NAVTEX and INMARSAT SAFETYNET. Coastal WZ are also broadcast on VHF and MF on selected aerials, when we receive them and at twelve hourly intervals (see broadcast schedules). Rig movements (RIGMOVES) and pipelaying operations are not included within these broadcasts. Note: WZ regions have been aligned with the nineteen inshore waters forecast areas and are numbered in accordance with the list at the end of this leaflet.

Negative tidal surge warnings are issued as a WZ on receipt, and at hourly intervals until they are absorbed into the next regular broadcast.

METEOROLOGICAL WARNINGS

Meteorological forecasts are broadcast at three hourly intervals and include inshore waters forecasts and gale warnings. Shipping forecasts for UK sea areas are broadcast twice daily. Gale warnings for UK sea areas are broadcast as soon

as possible after we receive them and are valid for 24 hours unless cancelled. Any gale warning still in force after the 24 hour period will be renewed.

A strong wind warning (SWW) will be issued if the wind speed in an inshore waters forecast area is predicted to be force 6 or more and was not identified in the previous inshore waters forecast. SWW are valid only until the next new inshore waters forecast. These warnings will be broadcast on receipt and may be included in the repetition broadcast. The legend 'SWW' will be included in the inshore forecast to indicate that a strong wind warning is in operation for the time covered by the forecast.

You can also find latest marine observations; shipping forecasts and gale warnings; inshore waters forecasts and strong wind warnings on the Met Office website and the BBC Weather website.

An enhanced extended (3 to 5 day) outlook is provided on the 518 NAVTEX Service covering the shipping forecast areas and is grouped into three areas covered by Portpatrick, Cullercoats and Niton i.e. North Sea, English Channel and SW Approaches, West Coast and Atlantic.

VHF

MSI will be broadcast by MRCCs on either VHF channels 23, 84 or 86, (or exceptionally on channel 10) following an initial brief announcement on channel 16. The initial announcement will indicate the working channel on which the broadcast will be made. The routines overleaf will be broadcast at three-hourly intervals by the MRCCs, starting at the times shown in the following table.

Routine A

Full MSI broadcast, including new inshore waters forecast and outlook, gale warnings¹, shipping forecast, WZ navigation warnings including negative tidal surge warnings², SUBFACTS & GUNFACTS³ where appropriate, and the three-day fisherman's forecast when and where appropriate.

- 1 New gale warnings, storm warnings and navigation warnings will be broadcast when we receive them. Such warnings may be announced on DSC.
- 2 Negative tidal surge warnings will be broadcast when we receive them, and at hourly intervals until the next scheduled routine broadcast. Such warnings will also be announced on DSC.
- 3 Broadcast from MRCCs Falmouth Clyde, Brixham, Belfast and Stornoway only and occasionally Aberdeen and Forth.

Routine B

New inshore waters forecast plus gale warnings.

Routine C

Repetition of inshore waters forecast and gale warnings as per previous schedule A or B broadcast plus new SWW.

Routine D (MF Broadcast)

Repetition of inshore waters forecast, gale warnings. This (MF) routine is only made if there are gale warnings in force.

MRCC	Routine A Twice a day as shown:	Routine B Twice a day as shown:	Routine C Three hours after Routines A&B
Shetland	0710, 1910	0110, 1310	"
Aberdeen & Forth	0730, 1930	0130, 1330	"
Humber & Yarmouth	0750, 1950	0150, 1350	"
Thames & Dover	0710, 1910	0110, 1310	"
Solent & Portland	0730, 1930	0130, 1330	"
Brixham & Falmouth	0710, 1910	0110, 1310	"
Swansea & Milford Haven	0750, 1950	0150, 1350	"
Liverpool & Holyhead	0730, 1930	0130, 1330	"
Belfast	0710, 1910	0110, 1310	"
Clyde	0810 2010	0210 1410	"
Stornoway	0710 1910	0110 1310	"

MF

For the time being, MSI will continue to be broadcast by the following MRCCs via MF on the designated frequencies shown below, with an initial announcement on 2182 kHz MF.

MRCC		Routine A Twice a day as shown:	Routine D Twice a day as shown ⁴ :
Clyde	1883 kHz	0810, 2010*	0210, 1410
Shetland	1770 kHz	0710, 1910	0110, 1310
Stornoway	1743 kHz	0710, 1910*	0110, 1310
Falmouth	2226 kHz	0710, 1910	0110, 1310
Aberdeen	2226 kHz	0730, 1930	0130, 1330
Humber	2226 kHz	0750, 1950	0150, 1350

Three-day forecasts, primarily for the benefit of fishing fleets in the North Sea, Northern and Western Isles and the South Western Approaches, are broadcast from 1st October until 31st March. The three day forecast will be broadcast as part of the standard MSI schedule times. These broadcasts are made twice daily on MF.

MRCC Shetland	Northern North Sea including sea areas: Fair Isle, Viking, Cromarty and Forties.
MRCC Aberdeen	Northern North Sea including sea areas: Viking, Cromarty, Forth, Forties, Fisher and Fair Isle.
MRCC Humber	Southern North Sea including sea areas: Tyne Dogger, German Bight, Humber and Thames.
MRCC Falmouth	South Western Approaches including sea areas: Plymouth, Fastnet, Shannon, Sole and Fitzroy.
MRCC Stornoway	North Western Approaches including sea areas: Malin, Hebrides, Rockall, Faeroes.

*These Broadcasts may also include GUNFACTS and SUBFACTS information on MF relevant to North Atlantic NATO exercises but only when advised by the Ministry of Defence.

BBC RADIO 4 WEATHER BULLETINS

Radio 4 broadcasts weather bulletins as follows:

0048 LW, MW, FM	Gale warnings, shipping forecast, weather reports from coast stations and the inshore waters forecast.
0520 LW, MW, FM	Gale warnings, shipping forecast, weather reports from coast stations and the inshore waters forecast.
1201 LW	Gale warnings and shipping forecast.
1754 LW, (FM Weekends only)	As 1201 bulletin



THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WILL BE BROADCAST USING THE FOLLOWING FREQUENCIES

SHETLAND

Aerials & frequencies	Saxa Vord, Fitful Head – 23; Lerwick – 84; Collafirth Wideford – 86
MF	Lerwick – 1770 kHz
Inshore forecast/WZ	Orkney and Cape Wrath to Rattray Head, Inshore Waters within 60nm of Lerwick
Shipping/ GW areas	Faeroes, Fair Isle, Viking, Cromarty
Additional	Three-day fisherman's forecast (October – March)

ABERDEEN & FORTH

Aerials & frequencies	Durness, Windy Head, Inverbervie, Craigkelly – 23; Noss Head, Fifeness – 84; Aberdeen, St Abbs (Crosslaw) – 86
MF	Gregness – 2226 kHz
Inshore forecast/WZ	Cape Wrath to Rattray Head and Rattray Head to Berwick
Shipping/ GW areas	Fair Isle, Cromarty, Forth, Forties, Tyne
Additional	Three-day fisherman's forecast (October – March) – GUNFACTS & SUBFACTS as required

HUMBER & YARMOUTH

Aerials & frequencies	Newton, Boulby, Flamborough, Hartlepool, Guys Head, Trimmingham, Lowestoft – 23; Mablethorpe – 84; Cullercoats, Ravenscar, Easington, Langham, Yarmouth – 86
MF	Flamborough – 2226 kHz
Inshore forecast/WZ	Berwick to Whitby, Whitby to Gibraltar Point, Gibraltar Point to North Foreland
Shipping/ GW areas	Tyne, Dogger, Humber, German Bight, Thames
Additional	Three-day fisherman's forecast (October – March)

THAMES & DOVER

Aerials & frequencies	Walton, Shoeburyness, Southend – 23; Fairlight, Bawdsey – 84; Bradwell, Langdon – 86
MF	Nil
Inshore forecast/WZ	Gibraltar Point to North Foreland & North Foreland to Selsey Bill
Shipping/ GW areas	Humber, Thames, Dover, Wight areas
Additional	Nil

SOLENT & PORTLAND

Aerials & Frequencies	Boniface Down – 23; the Grove – 84; Newhaven, Needles, Beer Head – 86
MF	Nil
Inshore forecast/WZ	North Foreland to Selsey Bill, Selsey Bill to Lyme Regis, Lyme Regis to Lands End including the Isles of Scilly
Shipping/ GW areas	Wight, Portland, Plymouth
Additional	Nil

BRIXHAM & FALMOUTH

Aerials & frequencies	Dartmouth, Fowey – 10; Berry Head, Lizard – 23; East Prawle, Trevoze, Falmouth – 84; Rame Head, Isles of Scilly – 86
MF	Lizard 2226 kHz
Inshore forecast/WZ	Lyme Regis to Lands End, Lands End to St Davids Head
Shipping/ GW areas	Portland, Plymouth, Shannon, Fastnet, Sole
Additional	Three-day fisherman's forecast (October - March) - GUNFACTS & SUBFACTS

SWANSEA & MILFORD HAVEN

Aerials & Frequencies	Coombe Martin, St Hilary – 23; Blaenplwyf, St Ann's Head, Tenby – 84; Hartland, Severn Bridge, Mumbles, Dinas Head – 86
MF	Nil
Inshore forecast/WZ	Lands End to St David's Head, St David's Head to Great Orme Head
Shipping/GW areas	Lundy, Fastnet, Irish Sea
Additional	Nil

HOLYHEAD

Aerials & frequencies	South Stack – 23; Great Orme – 86
MF	Nil
Inshore	St David's Head to Great Orme Head & Great Orme
Forecast/WZ	Head to Mull of Galloway
Shipping/GW areas	Irish Sea
Additional	Nil

LIVERPOOL

Aerials & frequencies	Caldbeck, Moel y Parc – 23; Langthwaite – 84; Snaefell – 86
MF	Nil
Inshore forecast/WZ	Great Orme Head to Mull of Galloway & Isle of Man
Shipping/GW areas	Irish Sea
Additional	Nil

BELFAST

Aerials & frequencies	Black Mountain – 23; Limavady, Orlock – 84; Slieve Martin, West Tor, Navar – 86
MF	Nil
Inshore forecast/WZ	Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough, Mull of Galloway to Mull of Kintyre and Isle of Man
Shipping/GW areas	Irish Sea, Malin
Additional	GUNFACTS & SUBFACTS

CLYDE

Aerials & frequencies	Torosay, Rhustaffinish – 10; Glengorm, South Knapdale – 23; Kilchiaran, Clyde – 84; Tiree, Law Hill – 86
MF	Tyree – 1883 kHz
Inshore forecast/WZ	Mull of Galloway to Mull of Kintyre & Mull of Kintyre to Ardnamurchan Point
Shipping/GW areas	Rockall, Malin, Hebrides, Bailey
Additional	GUNFACTS & SUBFACTS

STORNOWAY

Aerials & frequencies	Barra, Butt of Lewis, Skriag – 10; Clettravel, Drumfearn, Portnaguran – 23; Forsnaval, Rodel – 84; Arisaig, Melvaig – 86
MF	Butt of Lewis – 1743 kHz
Inshore forecast/WZ	Ardnamurchan Point to Cape Wrath
Shipping/GW areas	Hebrides, Bailey, Rockall, Faeroes, Fair Isle, SE Iceland, Malin
Additional	Three-day fisherman's forecast (October - March) - GUNFACTS & SUB FACTS

INSHORE FORECAST AREAS

- 1 Cape Wrath to Rattray Head including Orkney
- 2 Rattray Head to Berwick-upon-Tweed
- 3 Berwick-upon-Tweed to Whitby
- 4 Whitby to the Gibraltar Point
- 5 Gibraltar Point to North Foreland
- 6 North Foreland to Selsey Bill
- 7 Selsey Bill to Lyme Regis
- 8 Lyme Regis to Lands End including the Isles of Scilly
- 9 Lands End to St Davids Head including the Bristol Channel
- 10 St Davids Head to Great Orme Head
- 11 Great Orme Head to the Mull of Galloway
- 12 Isle of Man
- 13 Lough Foyle to Carlingford Lough
- 14 Mull of Galloway to Mull of Kintyre including the Firth of Clyde and North Channel
- 15 Mull of Kintyre to Ardnamurchan Point
- 16 The Minch
- 17 Ardnamurchan Point to Cape Wrath
- 18 Shetland Isles within 60 miles of Lerwick
- 19 Channel Islands

RADIO MEDICAL ADVICE LINK CALLS (MEDILINK)

If you are the master or skipper of any vessel requiring medical advice, contact the nearest MRCC on VHF channel 16 (156.8 MHz), VHF DSC or MF DSC, requesting radio medical advice. In an urgent situation, you should broadcast an urgency alert using DSC and the pro-words "PAN PAN".

The MRCC will give priority to requests for radio medical advice. A doctor from a hospital participating in the radio medical advice service will be contacted by telephone and will be linked to the vessel through the MRCC via an appropriate VHF channel or MF frequency. While the call is being placed, the coastguard will establish additional information with the vessel relating to position, a description of the vessel, and if appropriate, brief details of the casualty. Channels 23, 84 or 86 that permit duplex working will normally be used for these medilink calls.

Note: The radio medical advice service is free of charge. All radio and telephone traffic to and from MRCCs is recorded for the purposes of public safety, preventing and detecting crime.

REQUESTS FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

The master or skipper of a vessel requesting medical assistance or evacuation for an injured or sick person must seek radio medical advice before HM Coastguard arranges any rescue. While the call is being placed, the MRCC will establish additional information and may put rescue resources on standby. In exceptional cases, the MRCC may send a lifeboat or helicopter, but it is obliged to arrange a radio medical advice call for the vessel in all cases.

EVACUATION OF A SICK OR INJURED PERSON FROM A VESSEL

Taking into account the symptoms and implications of the patient's condition, the doctor will determine a course of action. This could be to treat on board, proceed to nearest or next port, or to evacuate. The doctor and the MRCC will discuss the need and priority, as well as the options, before agreeing a course of action.

Medical evacuation cannot be arranged on the advice of a physician outside the radio medical advice service. Therefore all requests for medical assistance must be arranged through this service.

COMMERCIAL RADIO/ TELEPHONE TRAFFIC

HM Coastguard has neither the facility nor the mandate to undertake commercial radiotelephone traffic.



Tel: **023 8032 9100**

Web: **www.mcga.gov.uk**

MCA 24-hour information service: **0870 6006505**

E-mail: **infoline@mcga.gov.uk**

This publication will be reprinted periodically as changes dictate. For the most current up-to-date version, please visit the MCA's website.

This publication is available in a number of languages and formats.

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If you have broadcast issues relating to NAVTEX, contact your nearest MRCC or the SAR Communications Manager on 01326 310800.

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