

Mayday — VHF distress call

Grave and imminent danger to a vessel or a life. Press the red DSC distress button first if fitted, then make the voice call on Channel 16 — slowly, and repeat until answered.

SAY, IN THIS ORDER

Say	What it means / example
MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY	The distress signal — said three times
THIS IS ...	Your vessel's name, three times
MAYDAY ...	Your vessel's name once, plus callsign / MMSI
POSITION ...	Lat/long, or true bearing & distance from a known mark
Nature of distress	e.g. sinking, fire, person overboard, dismasted
Assistance required	Usually "immediate assistance"
Number on board	How many people, including any injured
Any other information	Liferaft? EPIRB? Time to sink? Casualties?
OVER	Release the button and listen

Pan-Pan (×3) is the urgency call — serious, but no immediate danger to life. Sécurité (×3) is a safety / navigation message. Channel 16 (156.800 MHz) is the distress & calling channel.