

## **COMMUNICATIONS: EMERGENCY & RESPONSE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This document is designed to assist foreign and domestic commercial vessels to easily communicate with appropriate agencies regarding various emergencies and/or unusual situations while transiting Puget Sound. This document is not intended to suggest a departure from existing procedures set forth by the ITU, IMO and FCC for the handling of Distress or Urgency communications. The Puget Sound region is served by a number of Rescue and Vessel Traffic centers as well as the Captain of the Port command center. Commercial vessels should familiarize themselves with the areas of responsibility and appropriate working frequencies of the various traffic centers, which are available in the Puget Sound Vessel Traffic Service Users Manual (<http://www.uscg.mil/d13/psvts/>).

### **LIVES AT STAKE**

The safety of life at sea is of primary importance to the various agencies in Puget Sound. Types of incidents include injury to crewman or accidents on the vessel that threaten the crew or others. Such reports trigger joint responses by Search and Rescue Centers as well as the Captain of the Port in U.S. waters. To obtain the most timely response, you should notify the appropriate VTS as outlined in the attached chart.

#### **Action Items:**

- ◆ Canadian Waters- Contact Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) Radio Victoria via the appropriate VTS center (Clear with RCC Victoria).
- ◆ U.S. Waters- Contact VTS Puget Sound (Seattle Traffic) who will direct you to either Coast Guard Group Port Angeles or Sector Seattle for search and rescue and/or to the Captain of the Port for suspicious activity (security threats), ship emergencies (fire, salvage, oil spill, propulsion/steering problems etc.).

### **MARINE CASUALTIES AND OTHER REPORTABLE EVENTS**

This includes collisions, anchor dragging, grounding, oil spills and hazardous material releases of any amount, equipment casualties, loss of propulsion (including even brief losses) and any other situation which results in the loss of vessel control or possible loss of control, but does not immediately put lives at risk. **NOTE:** The Captain of the Port will not permit drifting. Vessels are expected to have fully functioning propulsion and steering while underway or at anchor, or a standby/escort tug(s) will be required.

#### **Action Items:**

- ◆ Canadian Waters - Contact Transport Canada Marine Safety through the VTS.
- ◆ U.S. Waters – Contact the Captain of the Port (COTP) through the VTS.

## REGIONAL EMERGENCIES

For port-wide emergencies or natural disasters, vessels should listen carefully to the appropriate VTS working frequency. The Captain of the Port may direct vessels to depart, delay arrival, or take other action to mitigate risk.

## AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

LOCATION	DISTRESS NATURE	AGENCY
<b>Offshore- Canadian Waters</b> In Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) Tofino Traffic's area of control West of 124° 40' W	Lives at Stake	CCG Radio Victoria directly or via CCG Tofino Traffic
	Vessel casualties	Transport Canada Marine Safety via Tofino Traffic
<b>Offshore- U.S. Waters</b> In Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) Tofino Traffic's area of control West of 124° 40' W	Lives at Stake	USCG Group Port Angeles directly or via CCG Tofino Traffic
	Vessel casualties	USCG COTP via Tofino Traffic
<b>Strait of Juan de Fuca E. of 124° 40' W to Haro Strait and Boundary Pass- Canadian Waters</b>	Lives at Stake	CCG Radio Victoria directly or via Seattle Traffic or Victoria Traffic
	Vessel casualties	Transport Canada Marine Safety via Victoria Traffic
<b>Strait of Juan de Fuca E. of 124° 40' W to Double Bluff, Whidbey Island- U.S. Waters</b>	Lives at Stake	USCG Group Port Angeles directly or via Seattle Traffic
	Vessel casualties	USCG COTP via Seattle Traffic
<b>Puget Sound South of Double Bluff, Whidbey Island and all San Juan Islands- U.S. Waters</b>	Lives at Stake	USCG Sector Seattle directly or via Seattle Traffic
	Vessel casualties	USCG COTP via Seattle Traffic

## AGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

AGENCY	CAPABILITY: PRIMARY SECONDARY	COMMUNICATIONS
Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) (Tofino Traffic)	<b>Traffic Management</b> Search and Rescue Vessel difficulties & Casualties	<b>VHF</b> channel 74, 16, 22A (Channel 70 DSC only MMSI# 003160012) <b>HF Distress</b> on 2.182 MhZ or 4.125 MhZ Upper Side Band
CCG Radio Victoria	<b>Search and Rescue</b> Vessel difficulties & Casualties	<b>VHF</b> 16, 22A, 84, 26 (Channel 70 DSC only MMSI# 003160011)
CCG Victoria Traffic	<b>Traffic Management</b> Search and Rescue Vessel difficulties & Casualties	VHF channel 11, 77, 16, 22A, 26 Channel 70 DSC monitor only
Transport Canada Marine Safety	<b>Vessel difficulties &amp; Casualties</b>	604-666-5300
USCG Captain of the Port (COTP) Puget Sound	<b>Vessel Casualties, Equipment Failures, Transit requests, Oil &amp; Hazardous Material Spills</b>	206-217-6001
Puget Sound Vessel Traffic Service (Seattle Traffic) (Works for COTP)	<b>Traffic Management</b> Search and Rescue Vessel difficulties & Casualties	VHF 5A and 14 (switch at Bush Point)
USCG Sector Seattle	<b>Search and Rescue</b>	VHF channel 16, 22A
USCG Group Port Angeles	<b>Search and Rescue</b>	VHF channel 16, 81A

## VHF CHANNELS

- ◆ Channel 16 – International Distress and Calling. For Distress, Urgency and Safety traffic and general calling. (Vessels subject to Bridge to Bridge and VTS are not required to maintain a watch on Channel 16.)
- ◆ Channel 20 – Marine Exchange channel. Use for communications with Marine Exchange, West Seattle Buoys and Washington State Maritime Cooperative.
- ◆ VTS Channels 5A, 11, 14 and 74 (See Puget Sound-VTS Users Manual for designated areas - <http://www.uscg.mil/d13/psvts/>.) For VTS traffic, reporting of casualties,

oil/hazardous material spill reports and any condition related to a vessels ability to navigate safely.

- ◆ Channel 22A -- US Mode) Coast Guard Liaison. The US Coast Guard does not normally monitor channel 22A so you must first establish contact on channel 16.
- ◆ Channel 13 -- Bridge to Bridge. For passing and safety communications between vessels. (Passing communications may be done on VHF channel 5A when operating in a VTS area where 5A is the working frequency.)

**REDUCE INTERFERENCE**  
**ALWAYS USE LOW POWER WHEN PRACTICABLE**

**HELPFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| ◆ COTP Puget Sound Joint Harbor Operations Center | 206-217-6001 |
| ◆ Coast Guard Sector Seattle Inspection Division  | 206-217-6180 |
| ◆ Coast Guard Group Port Angeles                  | 360-417-5840 |
| ◆ Marine Exchange                                 | 206-443-3830 |
| ◆ Washington State Maritime Cooperative           | 206-448-7557 |

**OIL/HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SPILL REPORTING** (This is not an all-inclusive list- operators should follow their Facility/Vessel Response plan as per applicable laws and regulations):

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| ◆ National Response Center                       | 800-424-8802 |
| ◆ Coast Guard Sector Seattle                     | 206-217-6001 |
| ◆ Washington State Emergency Management Division | 800-258-5990 |
| ◆ Canadian Coast Guard                           | 604-666-6011 |