

Radio Communication – Maritime Safety Stats and Facts

FACTS

Accidents can occur due to inadequate radio communication:

1. Inadequate communication regarding course changes, passing arrangements, or navigational hazards can lead to vessels inadvertently crossing paths and colliding with each other.
2. If navigational warnings, information about shifting channels, or updates on underwater obstructions are not effectively communicated, vessels may unknowingly enter hazardous areas and run aground.
3. In emergencies, if distress calls or requests for assistance are not effectively transmitted or received due to poor radio communication, the response time of rescue authorities or nearby vessels may be delayed.
4. Inaccurate or unclear communication can lead to incorrect actions, such as improper maneuvering, misjudgment of passing distances, or failure to understand navigational warnings, which can increase the risk of accidents.
5. Inadequate monitoring of radio channels and failure to receive or comprehend safety information broadcasts can result in vessels operating without knowledge of changing weather conditions, navigational hazards, or nearby vessels, increasing the likelihood of accidents.
6. Insufficient communication regarding the handling of hazardous materials or pollution response procedures can result in environmental incidents causing harm to the marine ecosystem.

STATS

- Over 1,500 people lost their lives when radio calls for help to ships in the vicinity went unanswered. Multiple smaller-

scale incidents happen every day across the globe.

- Analysis of the resulting casualty reports determined that radio communications are a prevalent causal factor in marine casualties, being a factor in 18 % of critical vessel casualties, 28 % of critical personnel injuries, and contributing to 19 % of critical marine casualties overall.
- Poor radio communication has been a main contributing factor in numerous maritime casualties, varying from groundings and collisions to entire ship losses and even worse, fatalities. There were 3 accidents in the years 2018 and 2019.
- 392 ships with radio equipment malfunctions with the means of Analysis of Variances (ANOVA) and Chi-square tests. It was found that ships of certain characteristics, such as type and size, frequently have radio communication failures.
- According to recent IMO statistics, 80% of accidents occurring at sea are caused by human errors, with half due to poor communication.