



## **FINDINGS OF CONCERN**

### **Sector Southeast New England**

February 8, 2019  
East Providence, Rhode Island

Findings of Concern 003-19

## **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS TO THE COAST GUARD BY VHF RADIO**

Purpose. The U.S. Coast Guard issues findings of concern to disseminate information related to unsafe conditions that were identified as causal factors in a casualty and could contribute to future incidents. Findings of concern are intended to educate the public, state, or local agencies about the conditions discovered so they may address the findings with an appropriate voluntary action or highlight existing applicable company policies or state/local regulations.

The Incident. On December 4, 2017, the uninspected commercial fishing vessel MISTY BLUE was underway nine nautical miles southeast of Nantucket, Massachusetts with four crew members onboard when the Captain and Deck Hand noticed the vessel listing to port. Upon inspection of the port clam tank by a crew member, it was unexpectedly discovered to be full of water. The Captain radioed a nearby fishing vessel on VHF Channel 18 and notified them the MISTY BLUE was taking on water. The Captain made unsuccessful attempts to stabilize the MISTY BLUE, at which point he instructed the crew members to abandon ship. Shortly thereafter, the vessel unexpectedly made a severe roll to port and immediately started sinking stern first. Two crewmembers of the MISTY BLUE did not emerge from the vessel prior to sinking.

Contributing Factors and Analysis. The Coast Guard's investigation revealed the only radio communications from the MISTY BLUE prior to the incident occurred on VHF Channel 18, a channel not monitored by Coast Guard watch standers. Initial notification to the Coast Guard that the MISTY BLUE was in distress came from the vessel's EPIRB. A VHF Channel 16 radio call for assistance was not made by the MISTY BLUE or any other vessel in the area that overheard the incident.

Findings of Concern. Coast Guard Investigators have identified the following measures implemented by owner/operators of vessels in similar service to mitigate the risks associated with the above identified contributing factors:

- If you are in distress, in an emergency situation, or in need of Coast Guard assistance, you are reminded to call the Coast Guard on **CHANNEL 16 VHF** (156.8 MHz) using the procedures identified in 46 Code of Federal Regulations 28.265(d)(ii) through (xiv).
- If a VHF radio is installed as required by 46 CFR 28.245(a)(1), mariners are to continuously monitor **CHANNEL 16 VHF** as required in 47 CFR 80.305(a).

Closing. These findings of concern are provided for informational purpose only and do not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirements. For any questions or comments please contact Sector Southeast New England Investigations Division by phone at (401) 435-2362 or by email at [ProvidenceIO@uscg.mil](mailto:ProvidenceIO@uscg.mil).