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Licensing

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Universal Licensing Syst

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- Radio Service Codes**
- SA - Ship Recreational or Voluntarily Equipped
- SB - Ship Compulsory Equipped

Who Needs a Ship Station License

You do not need a license to operate a marine VHF radio, radar, or EPIRBs aboard voluntary ships operating domestically. The term "voluntary ships" refers to ships that are not required by law to carry a radio. Generally, this term applies to recreation or pleasure craft. The term "voluntary ships" does not apply to the following:

1. Cargo ships over 300 gross tons navigating in the open sea;
2. Ships certified by the U.S. Coast Guard to carry more than 6 passengers for hire in the open sea or tidewaters of the U.S.;
3. Power driven ships over 20 meters in length on navigable waterways;
4. Ships of more than 100 gross tons certified by the U.S. Coast Guard to carry at least one passenger on navigable waterways;
5. Tow boats of more than 7.8 meters in length on navigable waterways; and,
6. Uninspected commercial fishing industry vessels required to carry a VHF radio.
7. Ships required to carry an Automatic Identification System (AIS) transceiver by the U.S. Coast Guard regulations enacted pursuant to the [Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2000](#).

Ships are considered as operating domestically when they do not travel to foreign ports or do not transmit radio communications to foreign stations. Sailing in international waters is permitted,

"SA" IS THE CORRECT SERVICE CODE FOR F/V'S THAT CAN ANSWER NO TO QUESTIONS 1-5 AND 7