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## Phonetic Alphabet and Figures

Welcome to DigiMar videos!

In this video, we will highlight the importance of correctly using the phonetic alphabet and pronouncing figures separately in VHF communications. The phonetic alphabet must be memorized, and no variations should be used in international exchanges. For example, "A" stands for Alpha, "B" for Bravo, and all VTS operators and seafarers must follow this standardized system.

By the end of this video, you will be able to recognize:

- the correct method for spelling out words related to ship names, and
- the correct method for using figures.

This video uses examples from real-life scenarios. They may have been kept in their authentic form to support learning, even when they include mistakes or deviate from maritime communication standards.

In the following exchange, DigiMar VTS asks Motor Vessel Sunrise to use the phonetic alphabet when reporting its call sign.

VESSEL	VTS
Digimar VTS, this is Sunrise, Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Houston, good afternoon. Over.	
	Sunrise. This is Digimar VTS. Request: Use standard phonetic alphabet and repeat your call sign. Over.
Digimar VTS, this is Sunrise. My call sign Alpha Bravo, Charlie, Hotel. Good afternoon. My ETA to pilot station one hour from now. Over.	

Digimar VTS asks Motor Vessel Sunrise to state its position. As you will hear, the ship does not spell digits separately (digit by digit).

VESSEL	VTS
	Sunrise. Digimar VTS. Question. What is your position? Over.
Digimar VTS, this is Sunrise. My position is forty-two degrees and zero nine minutes North, nineteen degrees zero eight minutes East. Over.	



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Has  
the

vessel stated their position by pronouncing each digit separately?

VESSEL	VTS
<p>Digimar VTS, this is Sunrise. Correct. My position four two degrees zero nine minutes North one nine degrees zero eight minutes East. Over.</p>	<p>Sunrise. Digimar VTS. Your position is four two degrees zero nine minutes North, one nine degrees zero eight minutes East. Is that correct? Confirm. Over.</p>

In the following example, Digimar VTS gives Motor Vessel Sunrise navigational information.

VESSEL	VTS
<p>Digimar VTS, this is Sunrise. Received. Two miles South.</p>	<p>Sunrise. This is VTS Digimar. Information. Proceed two decimal five miles South.</p>

Digimar VTS corrects the information, and asks Motor Vessel Sunrise to read back the correct information.

VESSEL	VTS
<p>Digimar VTS, this is Sunrise. Proceed two decimal five miles South. Confirm. Over.</p>	<p>Sunrise. This is Digimar VTS. No, that is not correct. Proceed two decimal five miles South. Read back. Over.</p>
	<p>Sunrise. This is Digimar VTS. Yes, correct. Out.</p>

Let us remind ourselves that all numbers in maritime routine communications must be spoken clearly and pronounced digit by digit. Additionally, the phonetic alphabet should be used when stating call signs, positions, place names, and similar information. This practice minimizes the risk of misunderstandings and ensures that both parties receive accurate information. Such clear communication is essential for safe and efficient navigation.

In the VTS Voice Communications and Phraseology published by the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities you will find more suggestions on how to use figures and the phonetic alphabet on pages 12–13.



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We hope that this video has been useful and that it will help you to successfully complete the chatbot exercises available at: <https://digimar.si/category/digital-tools/chatbots/>

Thank you for watching and stay tuned for more DigiMar videos on effective maritime communication!