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## Simple Statements and Questions

Welcome to Digimar videos!

In this video, we will focus on effective communication based on using simple statements and questions, usually composed of subject + verb + object structure. The aim is to illustrate communication exchanges between VTS and vessel which are simple, short, and informative. However, in maritime routine communications, an answer to a question should be full and not a one-word answer. Only in this way can the communication loop be closed.

After watching this video, you will be able to differentiate between the importance of using fully formed questions rather than informal ones. We will also elaborate on the use of *wh* questions to elicit precise information.

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.

Let us have a look at the example an exchange between Digimar VTS and Motor Vessel Sunrise. Motor Vessel Sunrise reports upon entering the VTS area.

VTS	VESSEL
Sunrise, Sunrise. Digimar VTS. Do you read me?	Yes. This is Sunrise. Good afternoon, Sir. We are entering Station area, sector two.
Thank you. Got you dangerous cargo on board?	Yes.

The informal tone of communication between Digimar VTS and MV Sunrise continues.

VTS	VESSEL
Classes and weight? (...)	Digimar Station. We have dangerous cargo on board.
Please tell me classes and total weight.	IMO class three. Total quantity on board five seven four six decimal six zero eight metric tonnes.



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Thank you. Crew members, passengers?

No, no passenger on board. Total crew on board one seven, including master.

If we have a look at the above example, we may observe that many answers and statements could be clearer and simpler. For example, for the sake of better information and clarification, it is advisable to ask full questions preceded by message marker „question“ as in:

Thus a question “Question: Do you have dangerous cargo on board?” This should be followed by the full answer: “Yes, we carry dangerous cargo” rather than “Yes”, or “No”.

Also in order to elicit a concrete answer or single information from a ship, VTS operators should use WH question words rather than the informal tone. Please compare the following pairs.

Please tell me your last port of call.

**What** is your last port of call?

Can you tell us the time of arrival at the port?

**When** will the vessel arrive at the port?

When do you think to leave the port?

**What** time do you expect to depart?

Type of cargo that your ship carries?

**Which** class of cargo does your ship carry?

Other questioning techniques to elicit factual information are as follows.

**“Do you** have any defects?”

**“Are you** ready to get underway?”

In the VTS Voice Communications and Phraseology published by the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities you will find more suggestions on how to create simple statements and questions on pages 9, and 15–16.

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!