



Sound Signals II: Restricted Visibility & Distress

The fog signals every vessel must know cold, the signal to attract attention, and the recognised distress signals from Annex IV. All restricted-visibility signals repeat at intervals of not more than 2 minutes.

R · 35 Power-driven in fog

- Making way: **one prolonged** every 2 min
- Underway but stopped: **two prolonged** (~2 s apart) every 2 min
- Sounded by the whistle

R · 35 The "keep clear" group

- **One prolonged + two short** every 2 min
- NUC, RAM, CBD, sailing, fishing, and a vessel towing
- One signal covers them all — high-yield to memorise

R · 35 Vessel being towed

- Last (manned) vessel of a tow: **one prolonged + three short**
- Sounded immediately after the tug's signal if practicable
- Every 2 min

R · 35 At anchor

- Bell rung rapidly ~5 s every 1 min
- 100 m+: bell forward + **gong** aft (~5 s each)
- May add **short-prolonged-short** to warn an approaching vessel

R · 35 Aground

- Anchor bell **plus three separate strokes** before & after
- i.e. three strokes · rapid bell · three strokes
- 100 m+: sound the gong as well

R · 35 Pilot vessel

- On duty may add an identity signal: **four short** blasts
- In addition to the appropriate fog signal
- Helps you tell a pilot boat from other traffic

R · 36 Attracting attention

- Any light/sound signal that can't be mistaken for another rule
- Or direct a searchlight toward the danger
- Must not embarrass another vessel

R · 37 Distress (Annex IV)

- **SOS** / "MAYDAY"; gun or explosion ~1 min; continuous fog signal
- Red rocket/parachute flare, red hand flare, orange smoke
- Flames, flags **N over C**, square flag + ball, arms raised & lowered

TRAP Easy marks to lose

- Stopped, not making way = **two prolonged**, not one
- Fishing & towing use the **same** signal as RAM
- Anchor = bell; aground = bell + **three strokes** each end

ORAL What the examiner wants

- "One prolonged making way; two prolonged stopped"
- "One long, two short — restricted, towing or sailing"
- List **four** distress signals without hesitating

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