

## CHANNEL 16

### Transcription

#### Music intro

This is a podcast about the sea. Because I, Threes Anna, I love that sea. But I am also worried and sometimes even afraid. What is actually happening in and with and on and under that water? Just listen.

The weather then. It is still storming up to wind force 10 on the coast and very heavy gusts of wind. The wind, I just mentioned it, it is going to pick up considerably. Wind force 11 has been measured on IJmuiden for an hour now.

Very heavy gusts of wind mean that we have to take into account wind speeds of 100 to 130 kilometers per hour with such a gust.

Say Jan, at the moment I have no connection at all, because that thing has blown off the roof. And of course, it is going terribly wrong and everything is swinging and festering. If you would be so kind Jan, would you call the central office and tell them that I am not available. Over.

VO Being at sea, when it's stormy. Then you're at the mercy of the waves. And everything is a fight. But a signal glides through the air.

I'm not a sailor of course, I only know that that thing goes on terribly. And we don't know anything about it of course, that's quite easy. Over. If there's trouble, then you have to give a shout, because then of course there's quite a lot to arrange. There are accidents of course. Over. It would of course be nice if you would mention it Jan, so that if something happens, we can call you. Over. Yes, that's good. Let's try to get through the night first. Because those wind speeds of 151 km per hour, you know that for sure. That's awful and angry. Good watch together. Stop.

VO [02:00] They are the signals that you're still alive or that you need help. Most people don't hear them, but Bert does. Not long ago I received an email from this journalist from Texel. He wrote to me...

B [02:15] As you know, I have several scanners in my house. I always have channel 16 on by default.

VO The Maritime Emergency Channel.

B I have made many recordings of that since the 80s. Would you like to hear them sometime?

VO This is the fifth episode of the series Zee.

[02:35] Channel 16.

Yes, Eierland Coast Guard, we are now going to 16 Leen, channel 16 about

T Did you keep all those tapes?

B Yes.

VO, He looks around at all the tapes and cassettes that are all around me in the room.

T [02:57] How many tapes do you have?

B I don't know. I really don't know.

T And you always have those scanners on?

B Yes, that is quite normal for me. I have one by my bed too. And you are sharp in such a way that you hear when it is really serious.

[03:13] And are you sharper when there is a storm?

B Certainly. Yes, of course. Yes, of course. Because despite the fact that there are warnings of course, that there are still those cookie-grabbers, I call them, who still have to be at sea. Or still go or are at sea.

Mayday relay, mayday relay, mayday relay. This is Scheveningen radio, Scheveningen Radio, Scheveningen Radio.

B But it can also just happen that in good weather, for example, there is a man overboard, a fire on board, an unexpected collision just as well as on the road. [03:50] So you never know at what moment a calamity might occur.

Following received from Dutch fishing vessel Jan van Toon. Dutch fishing vessel Jan van Toon. Collided with unknown tanker.

VO Collision with a tanker.

Tanker on fire stop. And leaking oil. Stop

B Let's say the ship is sinking. And then the first connection to Scheveningen is radio or the nearest coastal station.

125 Den Helder. Over.

VO Like this German fisherman did when he hit a wreck.

...425 It looks like it's an old wreck we've hidden. And we have...

VO We've got a hole in the bow and we're filling up with water.

... and full of water.

Yes Shipper. How many people are there on board? How many men? And what kind of lifeboats are there on board? Do you have a dinghy? Over.

B And he tries to find out what the calamity is, and as soon as it becomes clear the coastguard automatically calls in the rescue company.

Yes shipper, the lifeboat is on the way sir. I've made an alarm for you. And lifeboat is now on the way.

Okay thank you how long time it will take before the lifeboat gets there.

Well, he's gonna start in about a few minutes. So, I think it'll be so more than one hour from now sir.

One hour! Okay. We will try to hang on.

Okay.

[05:30] Lifeboat Idameri, coastguard Eierland calls the Idameri. Alarm! Coastguard Eierland calls the Idameri. Lifeboat Idameri on lifeboat Idameri. Lifeboat Idameri. The crew of the lifeboat Idameri. Over.

B [05:46] And then the volunteers of the rescue company go, they drop everything they are doing at that moment.

Good evening. Yes, what is going on?

About 11 miles north, scout Molengat, there is a Danish cutter, the T425. And the name is Anna Margaretha. It has hit an old wreck. It has torn open its bow and is slowly taking on water. But he says I am slowly sinking. So, he wants immediate help. It concerns three people. Three people. And they may have one dinghy on board. So, they can get off if necessary. But for the time being they will remain on board. And I have full radio contact on channel 12.

Good evening, harbor office, the rescue of Susanna. We are the outside steaming according to sinking Norwegian cutter.

B [06:50] If it really hits then first comes the standard distress signal and then comes pan, pan, pan.

Distress signal

B That is actually the same as SOS, Save Our Souls. So come to our aid.

Mayday relay, mayday relay, mayday relay. This is Scheveningen radio, Scheveningen Radio, Scheveningen Radio. With information number one. Following received from Coast Guard Den Helder. Danishes fishing vessel Anna Margaretha Making water. Require assistance. 3 persons on board. Lifeboat Susanna from Den Helder launching. End this is Scheveningen Radio.

B [07:32] And that is the signal for every seafarer. That is just a kind of law at sea. The nearest ships then head towards the calamity.

[07:38] Scheveningen radio, the Zeevalk. That cutter you're talking about. We're in the area and we're going there right away. Over.

Fine, that was well received. Thank you.

Ship's radio, the Karlsvik.

Karlsvik, Scheveningen Radio.

[07:58] That's 9 miles from the position you gave, do we have to go there?

Sir, we're never allowed to say whether you have to go there, but if you can go there yourself, then you should. But we're never allowed to say that, over?

We're already on our way, that'll take about three quarters of an hour.

Understood, Karsvik, thank you.

Scheveningen Radio de Zeevalk, over.

Zeevalk. Scheveningen Radio.

[08:24] We're still one and a half miles from the ship.

One and a half miles, okay, thank you.

Music

Den Helder Coast Guard.

We fall of the wreck and I think we are sinking now.

VO The skipper says he is sinking.

We are going now in the life raft.

You're going in the life raft, okay sir? And there is a small vessel in your neighborhood, is that correct?

Repeat this?

Can you see a small vessel in your neighborhood?

Yes, I just see him now. Do they have a pump or something on board?

I will ask him sir, stand by as long as possible.

Music.

[09:35] Zeevalk, zeevalk, lifeboat Idamerie over.

Yes, good evening. Zeevalk has two people from that cutter on board. And the third is still on board, over.

[09:46] Ditosleepo prima, do you receive me?

Yes, Bremerhaven.

Yes, do you have that information about that Anna Margaretha, that fishing cutter, is that okay?

Yes, that Anna Margaretha that was sinking. There were three men on board. Two men have been taken off the ship and one man remains on board. He is not yet completely convinced of the sinking situation, over.

[10:18] And that ship has now gotten off the wreck. And sinking. There is still one man on board and two have been taken over by the Zeevalk. The Zeevalk, that was in the area. There is still one on board and two on board the Zeevalk. And that one man stays on his wreck as long as possible, and all the lifeboats keep going until they reach him. That is the situation at the moment.

[10:45] Yes, okay thanks. Well, we are just leaving the harbor, we are going that way and then we will see where the ship runs aground.

That cutter, that position, is it stable at the moment that it is aground? Over.

That has sunk sir, its deck is already under water.

[11:09] Scheveningen radio.

Yes, Miss, we have taken the last man off. From that cutter. The last man is off. That man is on board the lifeboat.

Okay, fine. Thanks for the information. I will pass it on.

B Then it will be dismantled. And at the same time, the surrounding ships will also be informed. Things are going well or they are not going well.

Music song - sea are you my friend or foe.

B It is the case that shipping has channel 16 on as standard. And they hear this signal. Well then everyone is on edge. For example, the sinking of the Active.

Mayday relay, mayday relay, this is Scheveningen Radio, Scheveningen Radio, Scheveningen Radio.

VO During a heavy winter storm in the early 80s, a ship full of young people got into trouble off the coast of Texel.

[12:08] Active now sunk, stop. But nobody on board, stop. Please keep sharp lookout for survivors, stop.

B [12:14] The Active, that was in the Danish schooner, a kind of training ship, that was going to sail back from England to Hamburg against the advice.

[12:32] I was listening to that message, Kees. They just got a message about the Evertsen. They were there, they had reported that the schooner had sunk, they had found a live boat. But there was no one in it, so an airplane and a helicopter are searching. So that doesn't look good for those people in any case.

Scheveningen Radio, Scheveningen Radio, with information number three. Active now sunk stop. Aircraft and helicopter searching.

B [13:20] Yes, that the people at sea were seen, from above by the helicopters, but that because of the enormous force of the storm and the waves they could not possibly recover them from the sea.

Scheveningen Radio, Scheveningen Radio, information number four. Following received from Evertsen. Active sunk stop. Sighed several dead bodies, impossible to pick them up. Stop. Several ships and one aircraft still searching, end message.

B [13:54] And where they tried to bring the crew to safety with the navy and helicopters and such. But unfortunately, that didn't work.

Music

The weather was too bad. They couldn't get those people out, out of that water. Of course, you don't have to wait that long to let them down. That's true.

B If I were to turn on everything that could be heard, you would lose track. But because I mainly only listen to the emergency frequencies and the misery at sea, you have them tuned to that. And connected to that I have a cassette deck or a tape recorder. And when it really starts to get exciting, then the tape recorder or cassette recorder is turned on.

VO But you never know what you are recording and the recordings can sometimes be very bad. Like that summer storm of September 96.

B [15:02] That was an Urk cutter, on which there was also a crew member from Helder who had the misfortune of being washed overboard in bad weather. And of course everything came into action.

Dolfijn 1.8 miles from the cutter, our assistance is required.

Dolfijn IJmuiden rescue, how quickly can you be in position over?

That will take at least another fifteen minutes since we can only sail 6 miles against bad weather.

VO Then the coastal station tells the Urk fishermen that their mate has been found.

Can you repeat that calmly over.

[15:38] We received a message from the plane that the man has been found. Are you going that way? Yes, we are going there. We are going there.

That is understood.

VO 15:50 And while the fishing boat sails back to the given position, the man in the plane says that he thinks the man in the water is still alive.

B According to our observation, the man is possibly still alive.

The person in question, he was not wearing a life jacket. So that gave a very difficult situation.

16:10 That fisherman with man overboard. You have to go out of the starboard side. Your drowning person is on the starboard side.

Yes, do you see the drowning person then? We actually see on the buoy, over.

I assume that the drowning person is under that plane. Under that plane, it is circling around the drowning person.

Uh, we are now above it.

Is that rescue plane able to give a direction again? In relation to that Urk fishing trawler?

VO In the meantime, the rescue boat and the helicopter are also coming.

If the helicopter can receive me. Drowning man lies next to the blue coaster Dolfijn.

Drowning man lies next to the blue coaster Dolfijn. About 20 meters away.

Distance currently 50 meters next to the stern of the coaster Dolfijn. That is the blue coaster with the green deck.

Fisherman try to stay clear of the Dolfijn. The dolphin has problems maneuvering in ballast.

Can't get him around.

No, that's not necessary, we'll go around.

VO 17:25 It's a dance for life. Between the waves, the boats, the helicopter and the man.

And your crew member is in the arms of the helicopter at this moment.

Yes, thank you! We thought we had seen it.

Yes, that is correct. The drowning man has now been taken from the water and has been transferred to the helicopter. Over.

Well, fine. So, he is on board the helicopter. Then we know enough. Thanks

To everyone who is listening, thank you all for your help.

A message can be sent out that the search can be stopped.

B The rescue helicopter had him out of the water within half an hour, three quarters of an hour. And you can follow that live. And then you read that a day or so later that it went wrong. But you keep that tape and it just goes on the pile. And a year or so later, my parents rented out caravans. And a young couple from Den Helder came from there. And a quick chat, et cetera, et cetera. And they saw a scanner. And we started talking. And then at one point, the man says, yes, he says, I once lost a brother at sea. He is here; he ended up in the water near the Eierlandse grounds. I say, so and so and so on this and that cutter. Yes, he says, that is this and that cutter. And then it turned out to be his

brother. And I could help him in such a way. By having him listen to the event. Which also allowed him to pass on to his family what had really happened.

Music song sea are you my friend

B [19:30] It remains at all times, remains that you have to be alert, and that is something every sailor knows.

T And when was the last time you were at sea?

B Unfortunately that was quite a while ago. Just to get some fresh air. That was a long time ago and I miss that.

T And sigh, when you think about your own life and storms, do you have, what is most important to you, the storm in your life?

B Phew. Well, then I think it is the Texel 26. T But I actually mean a storm in your life, in your personal life. B Ehm, well, no, I'm not talking about that. No, never mind. Never mind.

VO, He pulls the lever and then his wheelchair starts moving.

Should we turn the scanners back on? Yes. Let's turn those on for a moment. First on. Manual. I think I had it at thirty-four. Should I turn that on? You have to turn it on. And then? Let's see. Den Helder, see you later. See you later.

Music outro

VO Since 1999, ships at sea have been required to work via satellite, which is why the need for radio traffic via the various coastal radio stations became increasingly less. Scheveningen Radio, the umbrella organization at the time, no longer exists. Nowadays, there is only one Coastguard Center, which is located in Den Helder.

The recordings of rescue operations in this podcast are mostly from more than thirty years ago. I have done my best to get permission from all audible voices. However, I have not been able to find everyone. If you recognized your own voice and I didn't find you, read the disclaimer in the show notes.

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