Antenna

Raymarine recommends that you install a VHF Marine band antenna with a minimum height of 8 ft. and gain of at least 6 dB.

The coaxial VHF antenna cable connects to the Ray218/Ray55 antenna jack on the rear panel using a PL-259 VHF type connector. The antenna cable length can be critical to performance. If you are uncertain, contact a professional installer or call Raymarine Product Support. If a longer cable length is required, RG-8x (50 ohm) marine coaxial cable or equivalent cable can be used for runs up to a maximum of 50 feet. If the distance required is even greater, Raymarine recommends using low loss RG-213 or equivalent cable for the entire run to avoid excessive losses in power output.

If the antenna RF connector is likely to be exposed to the marine environment, a protective coating of silicon grease (Dow Corning DC-4 or similar) can be applied to the connector before connecting it to the radio. Any other extensions or adapters in the cable run should also be protected by grease and then wrapped with a waterproofing tape.

If the antenna is not properly connected to the radio, or if the antenna is faulty, the message ANT PROBLEM will appear. See "Alert Messages" on page 33.

Antenna Mounting Suggestions

Mounting the VHF antenna properly is very important because it will directly affect the performance of your VHF radio. Use a VHF antenna designed for marine vessels. Since VHF transmission is essentially line-of-sight, mount the antenna at a location on the vessel that is free of obstruction to obtain maximum range.

If you must extend the length of the coaxial cable between the antenna and the radio, use a coaxial cable designed for the least amount of power loss over the entire cable length.

For optimal radio performance and minimal human exposure to radio frequency electromagnetic energy, make sure the antenna is:

- mounted as high as possible
- located where it will be away from people
- located at least 1.5 meters (5 feet) from the radio
- connected to the radio before transmitting