

MAXIMON MAX-555 PMR

Decent communication between your team gives you a far greater tactical edge than any bolt-on AEG goodies. You'll find most airsofters using PMR446 handsets - these licence-free radios are legal for use in most European countries, but not in the US. Regulations for these systems cap their maximum power, so there's a limit to the range whatever you spend, and while you can pick up walkie talkies for as little as £15, you'll be lucky if these work over much distance in the woods or at an urban site. If you want kit that's going to work well, you are going to have to pay for it. *Words & pictures by Jack Baxter*



BUYING A RADIO
You don't have to buy the same brand PMRs within your team, but there is one important consideration regarding the frequencies: All 446 handsets work on 8 different frequencies, based on 446 Mhz. However, by using CTCSS/DCS coding, you can effectively have far more than 8 channels to play with.

Some handsets allow you to choose the Frequency Table Number (1-8) then the CTCSS/DCS Tone. Others, like the Max-555, have 16 pre-programmed presets. If your team mates have fully programmable radios, you'll have to make sure that they tune into one of your channels. Out of the box, the Max comes with the same presets as Kenwood, but cleverly the company can re-programme these to suit any 16 channels you want.

WHAT DO YOU GET?
Maximon have been selling communication kit for nearly ten years, and the Max-555 is their new, professional quality radio. The range is claimed to be up to 5km, but what really sets this unit apart is the build quality - the tough metal chassis isn't something you'll find in cheaper handsets. In the box, you'll find one radio, a rapid charging cradle, a Li-Ion battery back and a belt clip.

IN USE
The Max is simple to use, having just the 16 presets to worry about. We've been using Alan 456 radios for years (a good quality, consumer orientated handset costing about £60), so used these as our benchmark. At a distance of one mile, we really found out where your money goes - we

had one Alan and one Max in an upstairs room in a busy village. As the crow flies, between these and the other two pairs of handsets were six houses, a hill, a road, a packing plant and a series of telephone wires. The Alans had started to break up at about three quarters of a mile, and were only barely usable at the mile mark. The Max-555s on the other hand were incredibly clear, with a strong signal and excellent sound quality.

The dials on the top have a positive feel, although if you do have the radio exposed on your rig, you'll want to make sure you don't accidentally knock yourself onto a different channel and think everyone's stopped talking to you!

THE THROAT MICS
Having standard Kenwood-style connections, you could of course have the radio mounted high on your rig, and use a simple, cheap earpiece. If you want the full tactical set-up though, you're going to want a throat mic. Maximon sell two versions - one with a D-shaped earpiece, and one with an acoustic tube. Both come with a large, rugged Push To Talk button, which has a strong, rotating clip on the back. With this arrangement, you can tuck the radio into a pouch, and just have the PTT button clipped to your rig.

Getting the mics into the right position can be a little tricky - if they're not tight against your throat it's very hard for your team to hear what you're saying. Once you've got them in place though, they work well, but do bear in mind that it's still not quite as clear as using the handset's built in microphone. If you want a full-on SWAT loadout, these are essential.

BUYING
The Max-555 handsets cost £130 each, while the throat mics are £82 for the D-shaped Earpiece, or £94 for the acoustic tube version. These handsets might be twice the price of more consumer based PMR's, but being able to have clear lines of communication is worth far more than that.

CONTACT
Maximon Solutions, Unit 4, Systems House, 94 Kitchener Road High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 2SW - United Kingdom. www.maximonsolutions.com or call 0845 873 6250

MAX-555 HANDSET: £130

THROAT MIC AND D-SHAPED EARPIECE: £82

THROAT MIC AND ACOUSTIC TUBE EARPIECE: £94



BOXOUT THE MAX-555 FREQUENCIES

Channel Number	Frequency	Frequency Table	Number	CTCSS/DCS Tone	CTCSS/DCS Setting
1)	446.00625	1	10		
2)	446.093758	08	88.5		
3)	446.03125 3	13	103.5		
4)	446.06875	6	05	79.7	
5)	446.043754	17	118.8		
6)	446.01875 2	18	123.0		
7)	446.08125 7	19	127.3		
8)	446.05625 5	07	85.4		
9)	446.00625	1	14	107.2	
10)	446.093758	15	110.9		
11)	446.03125 3	16	114.8		
12)	46.06875 6	06	82.5		
13)	446.043754	27	D132N		
14)	446.01875 2	28	D155N		
15)	446.05625	5	29	D134N	
16)	446.08125 7	30	D243N		

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