



16798.2  
19 June 2013

## MEMORANDUM

Eighth Coast Guard District Coastal Region, Auxiliary Policy Directive OPS-13-02

Subj: PERSONAL LOCATOR BEACONS (PLB)

Ref: (a) Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual, COMDTINST M16798.3 (series)  
(b) ALCOAST 572/02 PEPiRB/EPIRB Carriage Requirements for Auxiliary Boats  
(c) Eighth District Coastal Region, Auxiliary Policy Directive OP-01

1. **PURPOSE.** To provide policy guidance for members participating in the surface and air operations within District Eight Coastal Region (D8CR) in regard to personal locator beacons (PLB).
2. **DIRECTIVES AFFECTED.** Reference (c) is hereby cancelled.
3. **DISCUSSION.** Safety is the Director's paramount concern regarding any mission undertaken by the membership in D8CR. Some missions have very low levels of risk, while others operating in more dynamic environments incur higher levels of risk. Those members participating in the aviation and surface operation programs, by the nature and design of the mission needs they fulfill, have a higher level of risk to manage. Several steps have been taken to mitigate potential risk and keep air and boat crews safe, such as Crew Resource Management and Team Coordinated Training, establishing performance qualification standards and providing personal protective equipment (PPE). One essential PPE item is an Electronic Locator Transmitter (ELT) or Electronic Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB). These devices are used to locate the crews of downed air craft and crews that have abandoned their vessels. These devices are normally attached to the facility itself and are registered to the facility. Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) are electronic beacons that are attached to a pilot or coxswain, operate in principle as an ELT or EPIRB, and are registered to flotillas.
4. **POLICY.**
  - a. While an Auxiliary facility is assigned to duty, it shall have an ELT for an aircraft or EPIRB for a vessel that is properly and currently registered, in good working order and free to operate without obstruction of design by the facility and stowage of gear and equipment.
  - b. An aircraft owner may chose to augment an ELT by having the pilot carry a PLB. A vessel owner may instead of outfitting the facility with an EPIRB, maintain that the coxswain carry a PLB. If PLBs are carried as the primary or secondary electronic locating device, the PLB shall be worn on the pilot or coxswain in a manner in which the operator can retrieve and activate the PLB in the water without obstruction or hindrance at all times during the flight or the underway evolution. PLBs shall not be attached to a facility, not be stored in gear bags and not otherwise left without attachment to a person.
  - c. A Personal Watercraft Operator shall carry a PLB. The PLB must be attached to the flotation device or uniform worn by the operator while assigned to duty in a manner in which the operator can retrieve and activate the PLB in the water without obstruction or hindrance.

5. **AUTHORIZED EQUIPMENT:** If the facility is carrying a Category I or II 406 MHZ EPIRB the facility and its crew are considered as having met the requirement set forth in ref (b). If the facility does not carry an ELT or EPIRB, but instead relies on its crew carrying PLBs, the following applies.

- a. The ResQLink + PLB-375 USCG is the current authorized PLB for use in D8CR
- b. The McMurdo FastFind 406 PEPIRB, though no longer issued, is still authorized as long as the device remains in good and proper working condition.

6. **MATERIALS ACTION.**

- a. Though EPIRBs may still be used to meet the PLB requirement, the Director does not fund EPIRBs, EPIRB replacements or their batteries.
- b. Though the McMurdo Fastfind 406 PEPIRB is no longer under government contract, the replacement battery for this model still is. The Director will continue to fund battery replacement for this model until the contract is void. Members needing replacement batteries should submit a request for replacements through the ADSO-AV(M) or their FSO-MA, as applicable.
- c. Requests for initial issue of PLBs shall be made through the ADSO-AV(M) or FSO-MA as applicable.
- d. Batteries shall not be returned to the Director's office. Members and/or flotillas shall dispose of these and any similar batteries in accordance with local and state rules and regulations at their own expense.
- e. Unlike EPIRBs and ELTs, PLBs are issued to members, not boats and aircraft. Members will sign for PLBs on form AF-538.
- f. PLBs will be issued to pilots, coxswains and PWC operators. If funds allow, PLBs may be issued to crew members.
- g. As with all government issued equipment, gear and materials, the ADSO-AV(M) or FSO-MA is charged with returning to its inventory PLBs by members who desire retirement, disenrollment or non-participation in the aviation or surface operations program.

7. **RESPONSIBILITES.**

a. Director of Auxiliary.

- 1. As funds are available, the Director will provide qualified pilots and coxswains with the current authorized PLB upon request. Issuing PLBs to air and boat crew members is a secondary priority. However should funding allow the Director to issue PLBs to air and boat crew members, these members shall have the same responsibilities as are listed for pilots and coxswains.
- 2. The Director will provide a copy of this directive to each pilot and coxswain issued a PLB via the Materials chain of leadership.
- 3. The Director will keep a copy of the NOAA registration form for the PLB in the member's service record.

b. Pilot and coxswain

- 1. Thoroughly familiarize themselves with all applicable instructions contained in the PLB's owner manual.

2. Assure the PLB is maintained, including battery replacement, in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. Members shall dispose of batteries in accordance with the applicable state and local laws in which disposal action is carried out and not return batteries to the Director's Office.
3. Perform basic self test on the PLB once a month in accordance with the owner's manual.
4. Complete an Official 406 MHz EPIRB Registration Form. Once the form is complete, the member shall mail the form to NOAA/SARSAT as indicated on the form, retain a copy of the form and send a copy of the form to the Director's Office to the attention of the Operations Training Officer. The copy sent to the Director's Office shall have the name and EMPLID number of the member issued the PLB in the upper right hand margin of the form. The member is required to register as required and inform NOAA/SARSAT and the Director of any changes applicable to the registration form.
5. The member is reminded that the EPIRB Registration form needs to be re-submitted every two years regardless of any changes or no changes.

8. **REGISTRATION FORM.** NOAA/SARSAT's Official 406 MHz EPIRB Registration Form may be mailed or faxed to NOAA. A blank copy of this form appears as an enclosure to this directive. Future updated forms will be authorized for use. When completing this required form the following information shall be provided. Unless otherwise directed below, enter information on the form from the member's personal information.

a. **EPIRB Information Block:**

1. This information can be found on the PLB and on the box the PLB was shipped in.
2. Checksum – disregard this box
3. “Please affix manufacturer's label here.” – Remove the label from the box and attach it to the form. Tape may be used if the label's adhesive is no longer sufficient. Do not remove the label from the PLB and attach it to this form.

b. **Purpose of EPIRB Registration.**

1. Check the applicable box
2. EPIRB – enter the PLB's serial number

c. **Owner/Operator Information Block.**

1. Name: Flotilla number, For example, use Flotilla 081-09-01
2. Mailing address – pilot or coxswain's home address
3. E-mail – list the DSO-AV(M)'s or FSO-MA's email address
4. Telephone numbers – First list the servicing Orders Issuing Authority, then Pilot's or coxswain's telephone number, followed by the flotilla Commander's contact number. The remaining contacts may be added, but should not include members that would normally be on the facility.

d. **Vessel Information Block.** List information on the primary facility that the member serves as the pilot or coxswain for.

e. **Emergency Contact Information Block.**

1. Name of Primary 24 Hour Emergency Contact – Orders Issuing Authority if it has a 24 hour live watch. If not, list the servicing Sector.
2. Name of Alternate 24-Hour Emergency Contact – List the Sector. If the Sector is the primary listing, use the District Command Center as the Secondary contact. The District Command Center’s telephone number is (504) 589-6225.
3. Sign and date the form.

9. **CHAIN OF LEADERSHIP.** Questions, concerns and/or recommendation regarding this policy should be sent through the chain of leadership to the Directorate Chief of Response for D8CR.



R. F. HELLSTERN  
Commander, U. S. Coast Guard  
Director of Auxiliary  
Eighth Coast Guard District, Coastal Region

Encl: NOAA/SARSAT Official 406 MHZ EPIRB Registration Form



# Official 406 MHz EPIRB Registration Form

## EPIRB Information

Beacon ID (Unique Identifier Number)

15 digit character ID provided by EPIRB manufacturer

(15 digit character ID provided by EPIRB manufacturer)

Please affix beacon manufacturer's label here.

Checksum

Checksum input field

- Category I (Automatic Deployment)
Category II (Manual Deployment)

EPIRB Manufacturer

Model No.

## Purpose of EPIRB Registration

- New Registration, Change of Registration Information, Replacement of Decal Only, Renewal of Registration, Replacement for a previously registered EPIRB, Change of Ownership

Please enter the old unique ID number

## Owner/Operator Information

Name (Last, First, Middle Initial)

Telephone

Mailing Address

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

City State/Province

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

ZIP (Postal) Code Country

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

E-mail

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

## Vessel Information

- Usage: Commercial, Non-commercial, Government Military, Government Non-military

### Type

Sail: Number of Masts

- Power: Fishing, Tug, Cargo, Tanker, Pleasure Craft, Other

Non-power: Life Boat, Life Raft, Other

Vessel Name

Vessel Color

Survival Craft(s) on Vessel: Life Boat, Life Raft

Is your EPIRB equipped with a Simplified Voyage Data Recorder (SVDR)?

## Radio Equipment (Check all that apply)

- VHF, MF, HF, SSB, Other

## Vessel Telephone Numbers

Radio Call Sign

Cellular, MMSI Number

INMARSAT

Federal / State Registration Number

Length Overall (ft) Capacity

Homeport

City, State

Additional Data

## Emergency Contact Information (Please indicate someone other than the owner)

Name of Primary 24-Hour Emergency Contact:

Name of Alternate 24-Hour Emergency Contact:

### Telephone

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

### Telephone

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

Area Code, Home, Work, Cellular, Fax, Other

Signature

Date

ENCLOSURE(1)