



Office of
Deputy Commissioner
of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

Marine Notice

RAD-006
06/12

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS, AND AUTHORIZED CLASSIFICATION SOCIETIES

SUBJECT: User protocol, Activation, De-activation and Disposal of 406 MHZ Satellite Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB)

Reference: Maritime Regulation 6.180
Application for Ship Radio Station License (RLM-104)

Supersedes: Marine Notice RAD-006, dated 11/02

PURPOSE:

This Notice establishes procedures for programming user protocol, activation, de-activation and disposal of satellite Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB)

APPLICABILITY:

This Notice applies to all Liberian flag vessels outfitted with EPIRBs.

BACKGROUND:

Distress radio beacons, also known as Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB), are tracking transmitters which aid in the detection and location of boats, aircraft, and people in distress. Strictly, they are radio beacons that interface with worldwide offered service of Cospas-Sarsat, the international satellite system for search and rescue (SAR). When manually activated, or automatically activated upon immersion, such beacons send out a distress signal. The signals are monitored worldwide and the location of the distress is detected by non-geostationary satellites, and can be located by trilateration in combination with triangulation, respecting the varying quality of the signal received.

1.0 USER PROTOCOL:

Upon acquiring a (new) EPIRB

1.1 Every 406 MHz EPIRB must be programmed/coded with two key items of information:

1.1.1 The first item of information is the Maritime Identification Digits (MID) assigned to The Republic of Liberia by the International Telecommunication Union, Geneva. This three-digit code is 636 –

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followed by;

1.1.2 The second item of information is the trailing six digits of the ship's Maritime Mobile Service Identification number (MMSI)

1.2 This coding must be adhered to by the supplier of satellite EPIRBs being installed on board Liberian flag vessels.

1.3 Each Beacon has a Unique Beacon Identifier (UBI or HEX ID). The Hex ID is a 15 hexadecimal character string (valid range: numbers 0 through 9 and letters A through F), referred to as the beacon 15 Hex Identification, or 15 Hex ID. The beacon's 15 character Hex ID uniquely identifies the 406 MHz beacon and is encoded in the message the beacon transmits to search and rescue services when the beacon is activated. When the beacon is activated, satellites will detect the transmission and relay the distress alert to search and rescue services.

The Hex ID is found on a label affixed to the beacon or in the beacon documentation provided by the beacon manufacturer.

2.0 ACTIVATION:

2.1 When an Application for a Ship Radio Station license has been completed and a permanent Ship Radio Station License issued, the Administration facilitate the registration of the vessels EPIRB into the International Beacon Registration Database (IBRD).

3.0 DE-ACTIVATION:

3.1 If a EPIRB is lost, damaged, destroyed or otherwise rendered unusable and the beacon is replaced, the new beacon's 15 Hex ID must be submitted to the Administration and amended on the Ship Radio Station License. The Administration will facilitate the deletion and de-activation of the 'old' beacon's 15 Hex ID from the IBRD and replace it with the new beacon's Hex ID.

3.2 When a vessel is leaving the Registry, the Administration will facilitate the de-activation of the EPIRB in the IBRD.

3.3 If the vessel is sold to a new Owner, the new owner will re-code/re-program the EPIRB with updated key items of information.

3.4 If the vessel is scrapped and the EPIRB is left onboard, all data held in the beacon must be erased to avoid accidental transmission of distress signals.

4.0 DISPOSAL:

4.1 When a EPIRB is disposed of, batteries must be disconnected and all data erased to avoid accidental transmission of distress signals.

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