

EPIRB's and Personal Locator Beacons

The US Coast Guard issued an alert stressing the importance of proper registration of EPIRB and Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) after notification to their Search and Rescue personnel from a commercial fishing vessel was delayed and the launching of rescue assets to the vessel was also affected. The improper registration prevented the identification of the vessels' name, homeport and emergency contact information from being forwarded to USCG authorities. We should note that if a beacon is not equipped with an optional GPS receiver, it could take up to 100 minutes for orbiting satellites to identify its location.

1. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has begun an important safety initiative, emailing and mailing all owners/operators of EPIRB and PLB registered in their database and requesting that they take the following steps:
2. Confirm that current EPIRB and PLB registrations are correct. Also, cross-check that the manufacturer provided UIN (Unique Identifier Number) matches the one printed on the proof of registration decal you received from NOAA. This can be done at <http://www.beaconregistration.noaa.gov/>
3. Update EPIRB and PLB registrations if there are any changes to the vessel information, owner/operator information or emergency contact information or if your registration information has expired. This data must be renewed every 2 years.

Register new or previously unregistered EPIRB and PLB, as required by Federal Regulation, at the NOAA website. You can also fax the form to 301-817-4565 or mail your registration to:

Beacon Registration
NOAA/NESDIS
NSOF, E/SP3
4231 Suitland Road
Suitland, MD 20746

Courtesy Barry Tarnef, NAMS-CMS