

## **Bermuda 406 MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) Programming and Registration Procedure**

*It is recommended that persons fitting an EPIRB to a Bermuda registered vessel read this information sheet prior to purchasing a new beacon. This ensures the correct programming of the EPIRB in accordance with international and Bermuda requirements.*

1. Sea going passenger and cargo vessels registered with the Bermuda Registry of Shipping (in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Acts 1894 to 1988) are required by virtue of the Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) (Amendment) Regulations 1991, to carry a 406 MHz Satellite EPIRB from August 1, 1993. See note 3.
2. While not required by law, private recreational vessels may also fit 406 MHz EPIRBs. They must be in possession of either a Class 5 or Class 9 Radio License, as this provides the necessary radio callsign or MMSI number to be used when programming the EPIRB.
3. Every 406 MHz EPIRB must be programmed with two key items of information :
  - 3.1 The first relates to the country in which the beacon / vessel is registered. This 3 digit country code or Maritime Identification Digits (MID) is 310 for Bermuda.
  - 3.2 The second item of information identifies the vessel. This is achieved by programming the beacon with either :
    - i/ The ship's radio call sign (e.g. ZCAN3)
    - ii/ The ship's Maritime Mobile Service Identification (MMSI) number (e.g. 310123456). Note that the first three digits of the MMSI number are the MID for Bermuda (310).
4. All 406 MHz EPIRBs fitted to Bermuda registered vessels must be registered with Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) Bermuda (Bermuda Harbour Radio) using the appropriate registration form. Call (441) 297-1010 to obtain a copy by fax, or visit their web site at : [www.rccbermuda.bm](http://www.rccbermuda.bm)

### **The importance of registering your 406 MHz EPIRB**

A registration form must be completed and returned if full benefit from the operation of your 406 MHz EPIRB is to be obtained. While search and rescue authorities will be able to determine the position of the beacon, the registration process ensures that the vessel to which the EPIRB is fitted can also be identified. In addition, the emergency contact information supplied on the registration form enables the RCC to contact a related party ashore which sometimes provides further crucial information on the circumstances of the distress.

Registration information is also critical in the case of accidental EPIRB activation, where the owner of a beacon may need to be traced in order to have the beacon switched off.

**Because most EPIRBs are purchased in the U.S. market, they are supplied pre-programmed with a U.S. beacon code. This needs to be changed to a Bermuda beacon code at the time of purchase by having your vessel's Bermuda callsign or MMSI number programmed into the EPIRB. Similarly the U.S. registration form supplied by NOAA should not be used. Obtain and complete a Bermuda registration form. A bi-annual re-registration to confirm your vessel and beacon details, and emergency contact information will also be undertaken.**

RCC Bermuda staff are available 24 hours to answer any questions about this important process.  
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