



Marine Notice No. 33 of 2010

NOTICE TO ALL SHIPOWNERS, FISHING VESSEL OWNERS, AGENTS, SHIPMASTERS, PASSENGER SHIP MASTERS, SKIPPERS, FISHERMEN, YACHTSMEN, SEAFARERS, SHIP CHANDLERS, MARINE ELECTRONIC SUPPLIERS, DISTRIBUTORS AND MAINTAINERS.

**COMMERCIALLY AVAILABLE LOCATING, TRACKING
AND EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION DEVICES
(Commonly referred to as “man-overboard” devices)**

In recent years an increasing number of devices for use in “man overboard” situations are coming to the market. Several maritime administrations are concerned about the compatibility of these devices with the operation of the GMDSS (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System) and the SAR (Search and Rescue) System.

International agencies are developing recommendations concerning the design and use of such devices in order to avoid causing confusion or placing unnecessary burdens on the search and rescue authorities.

The Maritime Safety Committee of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has produced a circular, number 1365, to provide guidance in this area. The Irish maritime administration wishes to bring attention to this circular, reproduced in the attached Annex.

Queries in relation to this Marine Notice can be addressed to:

The Maritime Radio Affairs Unit,
Marine Survey Office,
Department of Transport,
Leeson Lane,
Dublin 2.
Tel: 01-6783453, Fax: 01-6783477
Email: radiusurveyors@transport.ie

Director General
Maritime Safety Directorate
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28/10/2010

For any technical assistance in relation to this Marine Notice, please contact:
The Marine Survey Office, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, tel: +353-(0)1-678 3400.
For general enquiries, please contact the Maritime Safety Policy Division, tel: +353-(0)1-678 3418.
Written enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:
Maritime Safety Directorate, Department of Transport, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, Ireland,
email: marinenotices@transport.ie or visit us at: www.transport.ie.

ANNEX IMO Maritime Safety Committee circular (number 1365)

**COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE LOCATING, TRACKING
AND EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION DEVICES**

RECOGNIZING the recent proliferation of non-406 MHz locating, tracking and emergency notification devices, and CONSIDERING the challenges these devices present to SAR services, ICAO and IMO wish to provide the following information to IMO Member Governments and ICAO Contracting States.

These commercially available locating, tracking and emergency notification devices are not compliant with internationally accepted performance standards and operational criteria for global distress alerting and therefore may be ineffective in emergency situations.

The following information may be made available to providers¹, users and potential users of emergency notification devices by ICAO Contracting States and IMO Member Governments, and may be included in State public relations campaigns on the subject.

- 1** Users subject to IMO/ICAO regulations and national regulations must carry as a minimum a 406 MHz distress beacon that is compatible with the established international Cospas-Sarsat system and compliant with ICAO and IMO provisions.
- 2** Non-regulated users may, as a matter of choice and in lieu of a 406 MHz distress beacon, carry emergency notification devices. These devices, and the services offered in conjunction with them, should meet performance standards and operational criteria equivalent to 406 MHz beacons if they are expected to provide equivalent functionality.
- 3** If an emergency notification device or service falls short of these performance standards and operational criteria, transparency would require that the limitations are clearly indicated to the user by the manufacturer. These limitations may include, but not be limited to reduced, diminished or lack of:
 1. global coverage;
 2. timeliness of alert to the responsible SAR authority;
 3. location accuracy and homing signal;
 4. automatic activation and survivability in the aeronautical and maritime environments; and
 5. distressed user identifier capability.
- 4** In order to ensure seamless, timely and effective alert notification to the responsible SAR authority, States may require providers of non-406 MHz emergency notification devices and services to:
 1. establish and maintain a user database that can be correlated with the transmitted data;
 2. establish and maintain reliable contacts with relevant SAR authorities;

¹ The “provider” is the commercial operator marketing the emergency notification device or service. The “user” is the person buying/leasing the device or service.

3. agree to procedures and protocols with the State concerned, including but not limited to test procedures, provision of SAR and user data on demand, acceptable information format and efficient resolution of false alerts;
 4. demonstrate that they can alert the relevant SAR authorities² 24/7/365 within 5 minutes of a confirmed distress situation, with positive confirmation of receipt by the responsible SAR authority; and
 5. demonstrate that they have robust processes and effective procedures for distribution of alert notifications. This would appropriately include training processes and backup systems to ensure resilience.
- 5** In order to give users a clear indication of actual effectiveness in emergency situations in specific areas, States may require providers of non-406 MHz emergency notification devices and services to provide potential users with a list of those States with which systemized arrangements have been made and in whose territories claims of coverage have been made.

² “SAR authority” is the organization with State-recognized responsibility for aeronautical, maritime and/or terrestrial response coordination. This includes a JRCC, ARCC, or MRCC as appropriate and if available.