



Marine Notice No. 55 of 2008

Amended: 22/11/2022

*NOTICE TO ALL MASTERS, OFFICERS, SKIPPERS, FISHERMEN, YACHTSMEN,
SEAFARERS, EPIRB SUPPLIERS, INSTALLERS, PORT AND HARBOUR
AUTHORITIES, SHIPYARDS.*

**Cessation of alerting and detection of Emergency Position
Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) emissions, on the
frequencies 121.5 MHz. and 243 MHz. by the COSPAS
SARSAT system.**

The purpose of this Marine Notice is to draw attention to the cessation of alerting and detection of Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) emissions on the frequencies 121.5 MHz. and 243 MHz. From the 1st February 2009 EPIRB signals on these frequencies will no longer be detected by satellite. They may be detected by aircraft and other search and rescue units having detection equipment operating on these frequencies.

The COSPAS SARSAT organisation is an international body, which provides a system of alerting and detection of Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons within the international Search and Rescue system. This system uses orbital satellites to detect EPIRB emissions.

The COSPAS SARSAT council at its 37th session in October 2006 confirmed its earlier decision taken in conjunction with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) at its 25th session in October 2000 that the satellite processing of 121.5 MHz. and 243 MHz. should cease as of the 1st February 2009.

This decision will effect all Maritime Mobile EPIRB equipment, Aviation Emergency Locator Transponder (ELT) equipment and Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) equipment using the operational frequencies 121.5 MHz. and 243 MHz.

All owners operating current approved equipment should be aware that all alerting and detection functions of a Maritime Mobile EPIRB will relate to the 406 MHz. frequency only. Existing 121.5 MHz. and 243 MHz. beacons will still have a homing capability if detected by ships or aircraft involved in search and rescue operations having the appropriate detection equipment. The 121.5 MHz and 243 MHz. will no longer be detected by the global coverage satellite system COSPAS SARSAT and only 406 Mhz. beacons will in future be detected by satellite.

The vast majority of Maritime Mobile EPIRB equipment fitted to Irish vessels and currently registered on the Irish EPIRB register, have for many years had a dual 406 MHz. and 121.5 Mhz. capability. These beacons will continue to be detected if activated on 406 MHz. without any degradation in service.

Any queries may be addressed to:

Marine Survey Office

Tel: 01-678 3400

Email: MSO@transport.gov.ie .

EPIRBs may be registered using the online Ship Radio Licence and EPIRB Registration system:

[Irish Maritime Radio Licence System \(IMRAD\)](#).

Director General,
Maritime Safety Directorate,
Department of Transport,
Leeson Lane,
Dublin 2.

21 October 2008

Amended: 22/11/2022

For any technical assistance in relation to this Marine Notice, please contact:
The Marine Survey Office, email: MSO@transport.gov.ie
For general enquiries, please contact the Maritime Safety Policy Division, email:
MaritimeSafetyPolicyDivision@transport.gov.ie
Written enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:
Dept. of Transport, Maritime Safety Policy Division, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2,
D02 TR60, Ireland.
email: MarineNotices@transport.gov.ie or visit us at: www.gov.ie/transport