



Marine Notice No. 25 of 2010

Amended: 22/11/2022

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

Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) Registry

The Marine Survey Office has for many years maintained a Registry of Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs). This allows distress alerts from these beacons to be dealt with effectively by the Search and Rescue (SAR) emergency services. In Ireland the first point of contact for distress alerting at sea is the Irish Coast Guard. The Registry also has a secondary role in the monitoring, determination and location of false alerts, which if not prevented would overburden the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS).

Both EPIRBs onboard vessels, and Emergency Location Transponders (ELTs) onboard aircraft, operate on the 406 MHz. frequency. They are required to be carried on certain vessels and aircraft respectively.

A Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) is a device that can be manually operated, which emits a distress alert via a radio-communications path, and is personal to an individual.

The 406MHz. PLB is not required internationally, but can be carried on a person. The PLB has similar characteristics to the EPIRB and ELT. However, the PLB has different specifications. EPIRBs and ELTs are designed to activate automatically when a vessel sinks, or an aircraft crashes, and EPIRB alerts may indicate whether the beacon was activated automatically or manually. The environmental survivability of the EPIRB and ELT is also to a higher standard. The PLB does not have these specifications and may only be recommended for use by a person.

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) has recently launched an online registration facility for PLB devices in Ireland and information is given below on this facility.

ComReg launches Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) registration website:

Personal Locator Beacons, or PLBs, are portable radio transmitters, which aid the Search & Rescue (SAR) emergency services in the detection and location of persons in distress. These devices operate in a similar manner to Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs) onboard vessels, and Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELTs) onboard aircraft, but are unique in that they are for personal use and are not registered to a particular vessel or aircraft.

EPIRBs and ELTs have been in operation for several years and are proven technologies, which have resulted in many successful search and rescue missions since their inception.

More recently, technological advances have enabled the construction of lightweight, hand-portable distress transmitters and hence the relatively recent emergence of PLBs onto the market.

In order to maximise the effectiveness of PLB usage, each PLB should be registered so that owner details as well as location details can be communicated to the emergency services, which, in many cases, assists in speeding up rescue operations.

PLB owners can now register their PLB in Ireland using ComReg's new web portal. For more information on how to register your PLB please go to www.comreg.ie and follow the path: Licensing & Services – Personal Locator Beacons.

Any queries relating to PLB registration may be addressed to:

The Commission for Communications Regulation,
Block DEF,
Abbey Court,
Irish Life Centre,
Lower Abbey Street,
Dublin 1.

Website: www.comreg.ie; or email: licensing@comreg.ie; or phone: 01-8049600.

Any queries relating to EPIRB equipment may be addressed to:

Marine Survey Office
Tel: 01-678 3400
Email: MSO@transport.gov.ie .

Your attention is also referred to the following previous marine notices dealing with EPIRB equipment: [Marine Notice No. 55 of 2008](#) and [Marine Notice No. 8 of 2006](#).

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

28 July 2010
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<p>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.</p>
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