

**Panama Maritime Authority**  
Directorate General of Merchant Marine  
International Representative Office, New York

Merchant Marine Circular No. 117

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**To: Owners/Operators of Panamanian Flag Vessels, Class Societies and Authorized Organizations**

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**Subject: Termination of Satellite Processing of Distress Signals from 121.5 and 243 MHz emergency Beacons**

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The International COSPAT SARSAT program, a joint Russian-U.S. effort has decided to terminate satellite processing of distress signals from 121.5 and 243 MHz emergency beacons. Therefore, mariners will have to switch to emergency beacons operating at 406 MHz in order to be detected by satellites. No date has been set for the discontinuance of the processing of signals at the lower frequencies, but mariners should plan now for the replacement of their emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs).

**September 2001**

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