



PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY
Directorate General of Merchant Marine
Segumar Panama

Merchant Marine Circular No. 158

To: Owners/Operators of Panamanian Ships, Recognized Organizations and masters.

Subject: EPIRB Registration

**Reference: Decree Law No. 7, 1998
IMO Resolution A. 887(21)**

1. The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, Chapter IV, Regulation 5-1, establishes that each Contracting Government undertakes to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for registering Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) identities and for making information on these identities available to rescue coordination centers on a 24-hour basis.
2. IMO Resolution A. 887(21) adopts the Recommendations on the Establishment, Updating and Retrieval of the Information contained in the Registration Database for the GMDSS, which should include the EPIRB identification code.
3. Beacon registration is essential for efficient SAR operations, and proper registration of a beacon can make the difference between success and failure of a search and rescue mission.
4. With the purpose to assist States in the responsibility of beacon registration, Cospas-Sarsat implemented an International 406 MHz Beacon Registration Database in January 2006. This database allows users to register their beacons and provide information that can be of great use to SAR services in the event of beacon activation. SAR services are able to query the International Registration Database directly over the Internet.
5. From February 2009 the Cospas-Sarsat Satellite System will no longer process the 121.5 MHz frequency and users could be denied Cospas-Sarsat services if they do not make the transition to 406 MHz EPIRBs before 2009.

6. Taking in consideration the information above, this Administration encourages owners of Panamanian flag vessels to register their beacons in the Cospas-Sarsat International Registration Database. This service is entirely free of charge and is available online at www.406registration.org. For additional information, consult Cospas-Sarsat via email at mail@cospas-sarsat.int or look under the Beacons tab at www.cospas-sarsat.org.

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