

Submission: **SR03-10**

Offshore Special Regulations – 4.19

EPIRBs

A submission from the Royal Yachting Association

Proposal

4.19	EPIRBs	
4.19.1	A 406 MHz <u>ship's</u> EPIRB shall be provided	MoMu1,2
	a) At least two 406 MHz EPIRBs shall be provided	MoMu0
	<i>b) It is recommended that at least one 406 MHz EPIRB should include an internal GPS, and also a 121.5MHz transmitter for local homing.</i>	MoMu0,1,2
	c) Every 406 MHz <u>ship's</u> EPIRB shall be properly registered <u>to the vessel</u> with the appropriate authority.	MoMu0,1,2
	<u>d) Every ship's 406 MHz EPIRB shall be water activated.</u>	MoMu0,1,2
	<i>d) EPIRBs should be tested in accordance with manufacturer's instructions when first e) commissioned and then at least annually.</i>	MoMu0,1,2
	<i>e)f) A list of registration numbers of 406 EPIRBs should be notified to event organizers and kept available for immediate use.</i>	MoMu0,1,2
	<i>f)g) Consideration should be given to the provision of a locator device (e.g. an "Argos" beacon) operating on non - SAR frequencies, to aid salvage if a yacht is abandoned.</i>	MoMu0,1,2
	<i>g)h) Beacons with only 121.5MHz are no longer recommended for distress alerting. Satellite processing of 121.5 MHz is being phased out. 121.5MHz will continue to be used for local homing by on-board D/F systems and for local homing by SAR units. Type "E" EPIRBs are no longer supported and should be replaced immediately.</i>	MoMu0,1,2
	<i>h)i) See OSR 3.29.1(e) for on-board D/F and OSR 5.07.1(b) for personal EPIRBs (PLBs)</i>	MoMu0

Current Position

As above

Reason

When the regulation was introduced 406 MHz EPIRBS were only available for vessels. Since the 406MHz Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) have appeared on the market. At present the regulations can be read to allow a boat to satisfy OSR 4.19 by carrying a 406 MHz PLB. This is allowing boats to carry EPIRBS to a lower specification than was intended.

OSR inspections have shown that an increasing number of boats are carrying 406 MHz PLBs rather than proper ships EPIRBS.

The specification of 406 MHz PLBs is much lower than that required for ship's EPIRBs: They differ from ship's EPIRBs in the following ways:

Ships 406 MHz EPIRB Specification	406 MHz PLB Specification
Must float in an upright position	not required
Must have a light	not required
Must be water activated	must NOT be water activated
Must be registered to a vessel	must be registered to a person

To make it clear what kind of EPIRB is required the word "ship's" and the key features should be added to the existing regulation.

Water activation and the requirement to be registered to a vessel have been identified as the key features which differentiate a ship's EPIRB from a PLB. Adding these two features to the existing regulation would make it clear that the regulation required a ship's EPIRB rather than a PLB.

The other changes are the renumbering required to the other parts of the regulation.