IRELAND

1. REGULATIONS

Acronyms and definitions listed below are not specific to the regulations of one country in particular. Following links are provided for information only:

- ELT: Emergency Locator Transmitter
- ELT(DT): Emergency Locator Transmitter for Distress Tracking,
- EPIRB: Emergency Position Indicating Radio-Beacon,
- FGB: First-Generation Beacon (technology based on documents C/S T.001 and C/S T.007)
- LADR: Location of an Aircraft in Distress Repository,
- MMSI: Maritime Mobile Service Identity,
- PLB: Personal Locator Beacon,
- RLS: Return Link Service,
- S/N: Serial Number of the device,
- SGB: Second-Generation Beacon (technology based on documents C/S T.018 and C/S T.021)
- TAC : Cospas-Sarsat Type-Approval Certificate number.

1.1 General

All EPIRBs, ELTs and PLBs must be correctly programmed and registered. The links throughout this document provide further specific detail if required.

- Registering of EPIRBs is carried out through the Maritime Radio Section of the Irish Maritime Administration which is part of Department of Transport.
- Registering of ELTs is carried out through the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA).
- Registering of PLBs is carried out through the Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg).

Details of registered beacons may be shared with other relevant national and international organisations including search and rescue authorities.

Marine Notices issued by the Department of Transport may, if necessary, be used to publicise important safety, regulatory and other information relating to the maritime sector in Ireland; including information updates relating to EPIRBs and PLBs used in the maritime environment. In order to be included on the mailing list to receive Marine Notices by email, please send a request to marinenotices@transport.gov.ie.

1.2 EPIRBs

The majority of Irish commercial ships/vessels are mandatorily required to install a float free EPIRB e.g. all fishing vessels.

Vessel owners/operators should familiarize themselves with the specific legislation and requirements that apply to their type of vessel and ensure compliance. The Marine Survey Office of the Department of Transport is responsible for the implementation of all national and

international legislation in relation to the safety of vessels, including the surveys necessary for the certification of those vessels. The Marine Survey Office may provide guidance on specific vessel mandatory requirements.

The voluntary carriage of approved 406-MHz EPIRBs on pleasure/recreational craft, and on other vessels where the carriage of an EPIRB is not mandatory, is recommended and encouraged. In this regard, the Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Recreational Craft provides information, advice and best practice operational guidance for users of a range of pleasure and recreational craft operating in Irish coastal and inland waters.

Note: the registration of voluntary carriage EPIRBs is mandatory.

1.3 ELTs

Any ELT carried on an aircraft must be correctly programmed and registered with the national agency responsible for initiating search and rescue. This is done by registering the ELT through the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA). The different types of ELT; automatic fixed, automatic portable, automatic deployable, and survival can all be registered through the IAA at the following link IAA ELT Registration Application Form.

1.4 PLBs

All PLBs carried in Ireland must be correctly programmed and registered with the Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) at the following link ComReg PLB online Registration. Only PLBs that are programmed with the Irish country code (250) may be registered with ComReg. PLBs that have any other country code programmed into them cannot be registered. Information on PLBs used in the maritime environment may also be recorded as part of a vessel's ship radio licencing process.

1.4.1 PLB Requirements for Fishing Vessels Less than 15m in Length

Revision 2 of the Code of Practice for the design, construction, equipment and operation of small fishing vessels of less than 15 m Length overall, applies to all fishing vessels, registered in Ireland, of less than 15 metres length overall, which go to sea to fish for profit from 3 March 2014. Under the Code, an approved Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) capable of transmitting a distress alert on the 406 MHz band shall be provided for each person on-board and shall be carried by each person on deck at all times. Each PLB should be ready to be manually activated. PLBs under this requirement must be registered with ComReg and the PLB information may also be recorded as part of the vessel's ship radio licencing process.

1.4.2 National Beacon Regulations for Serial-Coded PLBs

Administration	Country Recognises PLB Activations	In Maritime Environment	On Aircraft	Comments
	For Terrestrial Applications	Country Recognises PLB Activations	Country Recognises PLB Activations	
Ireland	R	R	N	All PLBs carried in Ireland (terrestrial or in the maritime environment) must be registered with ComReg. Details available at the following link ComReg PLB online Registration. PLBs must have a serial number beginning with 1F4E

Similar information is available in the new table on the Cospas-Sarsat website (www.cospas-sarsat.int) with the status indication in colors (**Y** = green, allows / **N** = red, not allowed / **R**estrictions = amber (see comments) and with the note that the national beacon regulations can be found on the Cospas-Sarsat website in document C/S S.007).

2. BEACONS CODING METHODS

2.1 EPIRB Coding Methods

EPIRB coding method is defined by National legislation.

Country Code	USER PROTOCOLS				LOCATION PROTOCOLS								
	Maritime User		Serial User	Radio Call Sign	User Location			Standard Location		National Location	RLS (Return Link Service)		
	MMSI	Radio Call Sign	TAC & S/N	Radio Call Sign	MMSI	TAC & S/N	Radio Call Sign	MMSI	TAC & S/N	Serial Number Assigned by Competent Administration	National RLS Number	TAC & S/N	RLS MMSI
250	Y	N [1]	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y

Note (1) Programming EPIRB with this protocol is no longer permitted. Legacy Call Sign programmed beacons will remain in place on Irish vessels for the remainder of their life cycle.

The following warning is provided to beacon manufacturers and beacon owners as general guidance:

WARNING:
Note for maritime protocols that use the Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) as the vessel identifier: As a result of recent developments, the International Cospas-Sarsat Programme has become aware of maritime Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs) being coded pursuant to Recommendation ITU-R M.585 using as the beacon "country code" the form "98M", where "M" is the first digit of an MID (Maritime Identification Digits) assigned to an Administration, or using the form "974". No 406-MHz EPIRB should be coded in these ways. A distress message from a beacon so coded will be processed on receipt by Cospas-Sarsat as "invalid" and either discarded or subjected to exception handling. The "country code" of all 406-

MHz beacons must be a valid MID assigned by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to an Administration, in the numerical range from 200 to 780. No exceptions.

2.2 ELT Coding Methods

2.2.1 ELTs

(This subsection does not include FGB ELT(DT) coding methods.)

Country Code	USER PROTOCOLS				LOCATION PROTOCOLS									
	Serial User			Aviation User	User Location				Standard Location			National Location	RLS (Return Link Service)	
	TAC & S/N	Aircraft Operator Designator and Serial Number	Aircraft 24-bit Address	Aircraft Nationality and Registration Marking	TAC & S/N	Aircraft Operator Designator and Serial Number	Aircraft 24-bit Address	Aircraft Nationality and Registration Marking	TAC & S/N	Aircraft Operator Designator and Serial Number	Aircraft 24-bit Address	S/N Assigned by Competent Administration	National RLS Number	TAC & S/N
250	N*	N	Y	N	N*	N	Y	N	N*	N	Y	N	N	Y

* : Where ELT coding was issued based on TAC & S/N in the past these codes remain valid.

2.2.2 ELT(DT)s

a) FGB ELT(DT)s

Country Code(s)	LOCATION PROTOCOLS		
	ELT(DT) Location		
	TAC & Serial Number [1]	Aircraft Operator Designator and Serial Number [1]	Aircraft 24-bit Address [2]
250	N	N	Y

Notes:

(1) This protocol does not provide an 'Aircraft Identification' as required by ICAO for populating the LADR.

(2) This protocol provides an 'Aircraft Identification', and an 'Aircraft Operator Identity' only when the Aircraft Operator Designator (3LD) is included in the rotating PDF-2 field, as required by ICAO for populating the LADR. Default 3LD values should be "ZGA".

b) SGB ELT(DT)s

SGB CODING OPTIONS		
SGB ELT(DT)		
Aircraft Registration Markings [1] (Vessel ID #3)	Aircraft 24-bit Address [2] (Vessel ID #4)	Aircraft Operator Designator and Serial Number [3] Vessel ID #5)
[Y/N]	*[Y/N]*	*[Y/N]*

Notes:

(1) This option does not provide an Aircraft Operator Designator (3LD) which is required by ICAO for populating the LADR.

(2) This option provides an 'Aircraft Identification', and an 'Aircraft Operator Identity' only when the Aircraft Operator Designator (3LD) is also included, as required by ICAO for populating the LADR. Default 3LD values should be "ZGA".

(3) This option does not provide an 'Aircraft Identification' which is required by ICAO for populating the LADR.

2.3 PLB Coding Methods

Country Code	USER PROTOCOLS	LOCATION PROTOCOLS					
	Serial User	User Location	Standard Location	National Location	RLS (Return Link Service)		
	TAC & S/N	TAC & S/N		Serial Number Assigned by Competent Administration	National RLS Number	TAC & S/N	RLS MMSI
250	Y	Y		N	N	Y	N

2.4 Return Link Service (RLS) Protocols

On 18 January 2020, Ireland notified the Cospas-Sarsat Programme of the implementation of proactive handling of RLS-protocol distress alert messages, and authorisation for return-link-service-capable PLBs to be coded with its national country codes.

On 6 February 2021, Ireland notified the Cospas-Sarsat Programme of the implementation of proactive handling of RLS-protocol distress alert messages, and authorisation for return-link-service-capable EPIRBs to be coded with its national country codes.

The Cospas-Sarsat Council declared effective 26 March 2021 the Return Link Service (RLS) at Full Operational Capability (FOC) within Cospas-Sarsat.

In March 2022, the Cospas-Sarsat Council decided to approve the operational use of RLS FGBs coded with MMSI. More information on RLS-enable beacons is available at https://cospas-sarsat.int/en/beaconownership/rls-enabled-beacon-purchase

3. LIST OF BEACON MODELS TYPE APPROVED BY ADMINISTRATION

The type approval of beacons is not carried out directly by this Administration.

EPIRBs: Beacons which are type approved by Cospas-Sarsat and the conformity assessment procedures in accordance with all relevant European Community regulations, e.g., Marine Equipment Directive (MED) which sets out performance and testing standards to be met by marine equipment placed on board an EU ship.

ELTs: Beacons which are type approved by Cospas-Sarsat and the conformity assessment procedures in accordance with all relevant European Community regulations.

PLBs: Models which are type approved by Cospas-Sarsat and certified in accordance with the radio equipment directive (2014/53/EU) as amended, and the Standard, ETSI EN 302 152 as amended.

4. BEACON TESTING REGULATION

4.1 EPIRBs

All EPIRBs should be tested regularly as per the beacon manufacturer's testing instructions/guidance (typically every month). Care should also be taken to ensure that the EPIRB battery and hydrostatic release (if installed) are in date.

If installed; float-free housing/mounting-brackets should be inspected for any signs of damage, such as cracking or crazing etc. and immediately be replaced if required.

As part of routine testing procedures, EPIRBs should be inspected for any signs of damage or cracks to the casing, or of water ingress. If any defect is observed on an EPIRB, it should immediately be rectified as required, as the reliability of the beacon may be compromised.

Any repair carried out on an EPIRB, or replacement of any damaged part should only be carried out in strict accordance with the manufacturers recommended procedures. Any repair should only be carried out by the EPIRB manufacturer, or, by a manufacturer approved shore-based maintenance facility.

Shore-based maintenance of all EPIRBs should be carried out in accordance with IMO MSC/Circ.1039 (Guidelines for Shore-Based Maintenance of Satellite EPIRBs), at intervals not exceeding 5 years, and immediately after any repair whatsoever to the EPIRB. Such maintenance should include a suitable immersion test to determine waterproof integrity.

The results of shore-based maintenance should be provided in the form of a shore-based maintenance report, a copy of which should be retained, and a label affixed to the exterior of the beacon detailing the name of the manufacturer approved shore-based maintenance provider and the date when the next shore-based maintenance is due.

The testing of EPIRBs that may be carried out as part of a vessel mandatory survey or inspection, irrespective of the required survey/inspection interval, should be carried out in accordance with IMO MSC/Circ.1040 (Guidelines on Annual Testing of 406 MHz EPIRBs).

The activation of an EPIRB may require that the beacon battery be replaced. If an EPIRB has been activated; either for distress altering purposes, or through inadvertent activation, then the manufacturers guidelines/instructions must be consulted and followed, in order to determine if battery capacity has been compromised. If the necessary information is not available in the EPIRB instruction manual, contact the manufacturer or their approved representative for guidance.

4.2 ELTs

Guidance on the testing of ELTs is provided by the Irish Aviation Authority in Advisory Memoranda AAM No. 04 Revision: 01 Date: 14.08.19. Note that advisory memoranda may be subject to updates.

4.3 PLBs

PLBs should be routinely tested and inspected for signs of damage etc. as per the beacon manufacturer's testing instructions/guidance.

5. POINT OF CONTACT FOR BEACON MATTERS (CODING, REGISTRATION AND TYPE APPROVAL)

Updated point of contact details for administrations are available at: https://www.cospas-sarsat.int/en/contacts-pro/contacts-details-all.

The point of contact for beacon matters is:

EPIRBS: Irish Maritime Administration.

ELTs: Irish Aviation Authority

PLBs: Commission for Communications Regulation

6. BEACON REGISTRATION

6.1 Regulation

EPIRBs: **Must be** correctly programmed and registered with the Maritime Radio Section of the Department of Transport at the following EPIRB and Ships Radio Licencing Forms.

Any changes to the vessel's registered EPIRB details must be updated immediately.

ELTs: **Must be** correctly programmed and registered with the Irish Aviation Authority at the following IAA ELT Registration Application Form.

Any changes to the registered ELT details must be updated immediately.

PLBs: **Must be** correctly programmed and registered with the Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) at the following link ComReg PLB online Registration.

Any changes to the registered PLB details must be updated immediately.

6.2 Forms

The relevant forms are available at the following links:

EPIRBs - EPIRB and Ships Radio Licencing Forms.

ELTs - ELT Application Form.

PLB - Online Registration Form.

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