MALTA

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

Nil.

1.2 EPIRBs

- EPIRBs installed or used from on board ships subject to the SOLAS Convention are regulated through an individual radio licence issued in accordance with the Electronic Communications (Regulation) Act (Cap. 399 of the Laws of Malta) as per the following link: https://legislation.mt/eli/cap/399/eng
- EPIRBs installed or used from on board ships which are not subject to the SOLAS Convention are regulated by the General Authorisations (Radiocommunications Apparatus) Regulations (S.L.399.40 of the Laws of Malta), in particular the "Thirty-Third Schedule" as per the following link: https://legislation.mt/eli/sl/399.40/eng/pdf

1.3 ELTs

ELTs are required to be installed on aircraft operated for Commercial Air Transport under Regulation (EU) 965/2012 Part-CAT-.IDE.A and H.

1.4 PLBs

The installation or use of PLBs are regulated by the General Authorisations (Radiocommunications Apparatus) Regulations (S.L.399.40 of the Laws of Malta), in particular the "Thirty-Third Schedule" as per the following link: https://legislation.mt/eli/sl/399.40/eng/pdf

All PLBs should be integrated with a Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) and coded with the Maltese country code 256 by using the Serial Standard Location Protocol only. PLBs can never replace a mandatory carriage of an EPIRB on board a vessel or an ELT on board an aircraft.

PLB-AIS beacons are currently not permitted to be used in Malta.

1.4.1 National Beacon Regulations for Serial-Coded PLBs

Administration	For Terrestrial Applications	In Maritime Environment	On Aircraft	Comments
	Country Recognises PLB Activations	Country Recognises PLB Activations	Country Recognises PLB Activations	
Malta	Y	Y	Y	Refer to S.L.399.40

*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

Country Code(s)	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	S/N Assigned by Competent Administration	National RLS Number	TAC & S/N	RLS MMSI
215, 229 248, 249, 256	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y

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(s)	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 S/N	Aircraft 24-bit Address	Aircraft Nationality and Registration Marking	TAC & S/N	Aircraft Operator Designator and S/N	Aircraft 24-bit Address	Aircraft Nationality and Registration Marking	TAC & S/N	Aircraft Operator Designator and S/N	Aircraft 24-bit Address	S/N Assigned by Competent Administration	National RLS Number	TAC & S/N
248	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	[Y/N]

2.2.2 ELT(DT)s

a) FGB ELT(DT)s

Country Code(s)	FGB LOCATION PROTOCOLS		
	FGB ELT(DT) Location		
	TAC & S/N [1]	Aircraft Operator Designator and S/N [1]	Aircraft 24-bit Address [2]
248	*[Y/N]*	*[Y/N]*	*[Y/N]*

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

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

Note: National regulations stipulate that a PLB should never be programmed with an MMSI assigned to a vessel/ship.

PLB-AIS beacons are currently not permitted to be used in Malta.

2.4 Return Link Service (RLS) Protocols

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.

On 24 April 2025, Malta notified the Cospas-Sarsat Programme that the RLS-MMSI protocol has been duly approved for use in beacons coded with its national country codes

3. LIST OF BEACON MODELS TYPE APPROVED BY ADMINISTRATION

PLB-AIS beacons are currently not permitted to be used in Malta.

4. BEACON TESTING REGULATION

- EPIRBs: Not applicable.
- ELTs: ELT maintenance is performed following OEM's recommendations. The maintenance tasks are inserted in the Aircraft Maintenance Programme approved by TM CAD.
- PLBs: Not applicable.

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

The points of contact for beacon matters are:

- EPIRBs: Transport Malta (Merchant Shipping Directorate),
- ELTs: Transport Malta (Civil Aviation Directorate),
- PLBs: International Beacon Registration Database (IBRD).

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

6. BEACON REGISTRATION

6.1 Regulation

ELTs:

Registration is done on AITP-M05 Appendix IV, as filled out and signed by the aircraft owner/operator: http://www.transport.gov.mt/aviation/aircraft/airworthiness/airworthiness-forms.

The information from the cards is entered into our database and sent to RCC Malta.

EPIRBs:

All owners of maritime satellite EPIRBs (intended to be used on board Maltese registered ships) must contact the Merchant Shipping Directorate within Transport Malta (TM) in order to register their equipment by completing a registration form, and if applicable, apply for an MMSI.

If a vessel has been assigned with an MMSI for the VHF DSC radio, the same identity should be programmed in the EPIRB. A ship may only be assigned one Call Sign and one MMSI.

Once the EPIRB is programmed, the programming certificate should be sent to Transport Malta in order for the related details to be included in the National Database.

PLBs:

PLBs should be coded with the Maltese country code 256 and registered in the Cospas-Sarsat International Beacon Registration Database (IBRD) directly by the beacon owners.

6.2 Forms

EPIRBs: Registration is done through this form:

https://www.transport.gov.mt/include/filestreaming.asp?fileid=3468

ELTs: Registration is done on AITP-M05 Appendix IV filled up and signed by the aircraft owner/operator: http://www.transport.gov.mt/aviation/aircraft/airworthiness/airworthiness-forms

PLBs: Not applicable.

- END OF SECTION -