# UNITED KINGDOM

## 1. REGULATIONS

- ELT: Emergency Locator Transmitter
- EPIRB: Emergency Position Indicating Radio-Beacon,
- 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,
- TAC : Cospas-Sarsat Type-Approval Certificate number.

### 1.1 EPIRBs

The United Kingdom require the mandatory fitting of 406 MHz on all SOLAS vessels of 15 metres or more in length and vessels under the Large Commercial Yacht code. The voluntary fitting of 406-MHz EPIRBs on non-SOLAS and pleasure vessels is actively encouraged.

Under MSN 1871 Amendment 2, Small Fishing vessel Safety Code, the beacon carriage requirements are:

- all vessels 10 metres (L) and over need an EPIRB;
- all vessels less than 10 metres (L) need an EPIRB or one PLB per crew member; and
- if the vessel of over 10 meters to less than 15 meters is being operated single-handed, then a PLB may be carried instead of an EPIRB.

The United Kingdom's legislation Statutory Instrument 2000 No 1850 - Merchant Shipping (EPIRB Registration) Regulations 2000, requires the compulsory registration of all 406-MHz EPIRBs carried on UK vessels.

The UK Distress & Security Beacon Registry is located at MRCC Falmouth and is responsible for the registration of UK encoded EPIRBs. Upon successful registration, the beacon owner is issued with a copy of the database entry and two "proof of registration labels".

### 1.2 ELTs

Regulations introduced within Europe and also by the UK CAA require 406 MHz ELTs to be registered on the UK Distress & Security Beacon Registry. The CAA regulations also specify that the UK country code of 232 to be used and details the acceptable coding protocol options.

On 4 October 2012 the UK CAA, National Air Traffic Services, issued a new Air Information Circular, AIC P 134/2012 replacing AIC 57/2003 (Pink 55), (available from: http://www.nats-uk.ead-it.com/public/index.php.html) which provides guidance to the aeronautical community on the coding and registration of UK-coded ELTs.

The UK has filed a Notification of Difference with ICAO to ICAO Annex 10, Volume III, Part 2, Chapter 5, Paragraph 2.3, Sub-paragraph 2.3.3, which specifies the setting of bit 26 in the digital message transmitted by an ELT.

## 1.3 PLBs

The Licensing authority (OFCOM) has agreed that PLBs are licence exempt in the UK for use in maritime, aviation and overland environments as long as the vessel or aircraft that they are carried onboard has a radio licence.

There are legislative carriage requirements for PLBs carried on Fishing vessels as detailed in the EPIRB section 1.1.

All UK encoded PLBs using Serialised protocols are to be registered on the UK Distress & Security Beacon Registry.

### 1.3.1 National Beacon Regulations for Serial-Coded PLBs

| **Country / Territory** | **For terrestrial applications** | **In maritime environment** | **On aircraft** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Country recognizes PLB Activations** | **Country recognizes PLB Activations** | **Country recognizes PLB Activations** |
| UK | Y | Y | Y |
| Comments | Nil | Nil | Nil |

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).

## 1.4 Other beacons

For information relating to the registration of Ship Security Alert System (SSAS) beacons and Simplified-Voyage Data Recorder (S-VDR) beacons please contact the UK Distress & Security Beacon Registry, Tel: +44 020 3817 2006.

## 2. BEACONS CODING METHODS

### 2.1 EPIRB Coding Methods

| Country Codes [1] | USER PROTOCOLS | | | | LOCATION PROTOCOLS | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Maritime User | Serial User | | Radio Call Sign | User Location | | | Standard Location | | National Location Serial Number | RLS (Return Link Service) Location Protocol | | |
| | MMSI | Radio Call Sign | TAC & S/N | Radio Call Sign | MMSI | TAC & S/N | Radio Call Sign | MMSI | TAC & S/N | Assigned by Competent Administration | National RLS Number | TAC & S/N | RLS MMSI |
| 232<br>233<br>234<br>235 | Y[2] | N | Y | N | Y[2] | Y | N | Y[2] | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y[2] |

Notes 1: MIDs 232, 233, 234, and 235 are allowed, in order to match the encoded MMSI as necessary.
2: For coding EPIRBs with maritime protocols using MMSI, please refer to the Safety Bulletin 30 of the Maritime & Coastguard Agency

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

| Country Code | USER PROTOCOLS | | | | LOCATION PROTOCOLS | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Serial User | | | Aviation User | User Location | | | | Standard Location | | | National Location Serial Number | RLS (Return Link Service) Location Protocol | |
| | TAC & S/N | Aircraft Operator Designator and Serial Number | Aircraft 24-bit Address | Aircraft Nationality and Registration Marking | TAC & S/N | Assigned by Competent Administration | Aircraft 24-bit Address | Aircraft Nationality and Registration Marking | TAC & S/N | Aircraft Operator Designator and Serial Number | Aircraft 24-bit Address | Assigned by Competent Administration | National RLS Number | TAC & S/N |
| 232 | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | N | N | N | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |

| Country Code(s) | LOCATION PROTOCOLS | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | ELT(DT) Location | | |
| | TAC & Serial Number [1] | Aircraft Operator Designator and Serial Number [1] | Aircraft 24-bit Address [2] |
| 232 | 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.

## 2.3 PLB Coding Methods

| Country Code | USER PROTOCOLS | LOCATION PROTOCOLS | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Serial User | User Location | Standard Location | National Location Serial Number | RLS (Return Link Service) Location Protocol | | |
| | TAC & S/N | TAC & S/N | | Assigned by Competent Administration | National RLS Number | TAC & S/N | RLS MMSI |
| 232 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N |

## 2.4 Return Link Service (RLS) Protocols

On 20 January 2020, the United Kingdom notified the Cospas-Sarsat Programme of the implementation of proactive handling of RLS-protocol distress alert messages, and authorization for return-link-service-capable beacons to be coded with its national country codes.

## 3. LIST OF BEACON MODELS TYPE APPROVED BY ADMINISTRATION

Not available.

## 4. BEACON TESTING REGULATION

Not available.

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

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

## 6. BEACON REGISTRATION FORMS

Online beacon registration forms are available at: www.gov.uk/406beacon (EPIRBs, PLBs and ELTs (maritime / aviation / overland use).

Please note this does not currently provide direct customer access to the UK database.

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