

EPIRB – 5 Point Check List Before You Go To Sea

1. What is the very first thing to do?

Check that your EPIRB user registration is up to date, if the EPIRB is new to you then make a registration as soon as possible.

To find out how to register your EPIRB, click here:

<https://www.cospas-sarsat.int/en/beacon-ownership/registering-a-406-mhz-beacon>

2. How does my EPIRB work?

Most EPIRBs can be automatically or manually activated. Automatic versions will have a hydro-static release mechanism (HRU) that will release it from the bracket so it can float to the surface and start transmitting. Do it now, familiarise yourself with your EPIRBs manual activation ON switch procedure and how to release it from its mounting bracket.

3. I want to make sure my EPIRB works, can I test it?

The EPIRB should only be live activated when you are in grave and imminent danger. But the EPIRB helpfully has in-built self-test features. Operating the self-test allows the entire unit, including electronics, battery and antenna, to be tested without generating a false alarm. Check your EPIRBs user guide for the exact instructions regarding how to start and read back the results of the self-test.

4. What to look for when checking if the EPIRB is installed correctly?

An automatic EPIRBs mounting position must have clear access around it to allow the lid to open cleanly and the EPIRB to float free clear of overhangs, vessel rigging, antennas etc. And not be mounted where damage is likely by direct impact from crashing waves or placed where it could be a crew tripping hazard or unintended grab hand. An automatic EPIRB has to sink to roughly three meters before it will be release from its bracket, so remember to take this into account when checking its mounting position is good. A vessel can also be a pretty hazardous environment for an EPIRB, avoid locating it close to engine exhaust fumes, powerful heat sources and chemical or oil storage areas. And easy access in an emergency is of course very important as well.

5. How can I easily identify any potential defects?

Careful visual inspection on a regular bases is key. Metal parts should be bright and free of rust, plastic parts should have no visible cracking. Over time, plastic and paint finishes may start to show signs of fading but clear plastic parts should remain reasonably transparent. No water droplets should be visible inside when looking into the clear plastic dome. Check the battery and hydrostatic release expiry dates are valid. Verify that the lanyard cord is securely attached to the EPIRB body and not tied off to the vessel or the mounting bracket.

Any Questions or Feedback?

If you have any questions or feedback about the above or any of our products in our range, then please [click here](#) to complete an online feedback form.