

	GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA DEPARTMENT OF MARINE SERVICES AND MERCHANT SHIPPING (ADOMS) Circular 02-002-02 Testing and Maintenance of Satellite EPIRBs	Document	Circ. 02-002-02
		Revision	01
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		Reference	1. SOLAS 74, as amended Reg.IV/15.9
		Subject	Guideline on Annual Testing and Maintenance of EPIRBs

Circular letter to:

all companies having registered their ships under the flag of Antigua and Barbuda W.I.;
all ships registered under the flag of Antigua and Barbuda W.I.

Antigua and Barbuda wishes to draw the attention of companies, masters and officers to the new regulation in accordance with SOLAS IV/15.9.1 and 15.9.2 which will enter into force on 1st July 2006.

1. The annual testing of satellite EPIRBs is required by new SOLAS regulation IV/15.9.1 entering into force on 1st July 2006 for cargo ships within 3 month before the expiry date or 3 months before or after the anniversary date of the cargo ship Safety Radio Certificate.
2. The testing should be carried out using suitable test equipment capable of performing all the relevant measurements required in these guidelines. All checks of electrical parameters should be performed in the self-test mode, if possible. Shore-based maintenance (SBM) provider should have a quality system in place audited by a competent authority. The SBM should keep records of maintenance available for inspection by the Administration as may be required.
3. The examination of the installed 406 MHz satellite EPIRB should include:
 - .1 checking position and mounting for float-free operation;
 - .2 verifying the presence of a firmly attached lanyard in good condition; the lanyard should be neatly stowed, and must not be tied to the vessel or the mounting bracket;
 - .3 carrying out visual inspection for defects;
 - .4 carrying out the self-test routine;
 - .5 checking that the EPIRB identification (15 Hex ID and other required information) is clearly marked on the outside of the equipment;
 - .6 decoding the EPIRB 15 Hexadecimal Identification Digits (15 Hex ID) and other information from the transmitted signal, checking that the decoded information (15 Hex ID or MMSI/call sign data, as required by the Administration) is identical to the identification marked on the beacon.
 - .7 checking registration through documentation or through the point of contact associated with that country code;

- .8 checking the battery expiry date;
 - .9 checking the hydrostatic release and its expiry date, as appropriate;
 - .10 checking the emission in the 406 MHz band using the self-test mode or an appropriate device to avoid transmission of a distress call to the satellites;
 - .11 if possible, checking emission on the 121.5 MHz frequency using the self-test mode or an appropriate device to avoid activating the satellite system;
 - .12 checking that the EPIRB has been maintained by an approved shore-based maintenance provider at intervals required by the Administration;
 - .13 after the test, remounting the EPIRB in its bracket, checking that no transmission has been started; and
 - .14 verifying the presence of beacon operating instructions.
4. The servicing intervals of all satellite EPIRBs shall not exceed 12 months, which may be extended to 17 months where in any case this is practicable in exceptional circumstances.
5. According to SOLAS IV/15.9.2 satellite EPIRBs shall be subject to shore-based maintenance from 1 July 2006 on at intervals not exceeding 5 years, to be performed at an approved facility.

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