



**TANGGAPAN NG KOMANDANTE**  
**(Office of the Commandant)**  
**PUNONGHIMPILAN TANOD BAYBAYIN NG PILIPINAS**  
**(Headquarters Philippine Coast Guard)**  
139 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Port Area  
Manila

**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR**  
**NUMBER.....07-94**

**INSTALLATION OF EPIRB**  
**(EMERGENCY POSITIONING INDICATING RADIO BEACON)**  
**ON BOARD PHILIPPINE REGISTERED VESSELS**

**I. REFERENCE/AUTHORITY:**

- A.** RA 5173
- B.** Chapter IV of SOLAS 74 International Convention as amended by Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) conference on 09 Nov 98;
- C.** NTC Deputy Commissioner letter to CPCG dated 19 March 1991

**II. PURPOSE:**

This Memorandum Circular requires all Philippine registered vessels to have the required number of EPIRB on board

**III. SCOPE:**

This Memorandum Circular applies to all Philippine registered vessels and mandatory for all uninspected vessels such as tug boats, small freight vessels, commercial fishing vessels for hire under 100 gross tons carrying (eleven) 11 or fewer passenger and all vessels continuously navigating for twelve (12) hours

**IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS:**

**EPIRB** is an emergency positioning indicating radio beacon. It is basically an automatic radio transmitter which emits a distress signal to Search and Rescue

(SAR) Satellites. EPIRB is a relatively new device in the area of radio which bypasses many of the short comings inherent to maritime radio communications.

**V. POLICY:**

- A.** The Philippine Coast Guard being the government agency tasked in the promotion and enhancement of safety of navigation requires the EPIRB be installed and operating on board all Philippine registered vessels. In accordance with the 1974 SOLAS, to which the Philippine is a signatory, as amended by the 1998 GMDSS conference, every ship should be fitted with 406 MHz not later than 1 August 1993.
- B.** All EPIRB shall be registered with the PCG in order to identify the owner's address, carrier's vessel size, color, beacon number, etc by sending to PCG the registration card immediate upon acquisition and installation. The PCG shall maintain a registry listing of all beacons installed on board Philippine-registered vessels, which is also analogous to other national registers. The administration will only authorize COSPAS-SARSAT type approved EPIRB will be jointly undertaken by PCG and NTC.

**VI. PROCEDURE:**

A unique beacon code in all ship messages using 406 MHz Satellite EPIRB shall be adopted by all uninspected Philippine-registered vessels so that lifesaving/rescue stations can identify the ship in distress. The beacon code as proposed by the COSPAS-SARSAT Council should be followed by a radio call sign. The MDS assigned to the Philippine by the International Telecommunications Union in Geneva is "548"

**VII. ADMINISTRATIVE FINE AND SANCTION:**

Non-compliance or violation of this requirement shall be meted with the following penalties:

- A.** Owner/Operator who fails to have an EPIRB aboard his vessel during the Coast Guard first inspection will be fined an amount of P 2,000.00 and amount of P5, 000.00 for the second inspection.
- B.** In case the radio operator of the vessel is unable to transmit properly the coded International frequency during inspection, he shall be fined an amount of P 1,000.00 for the first offense. He shall likewise be recommended for suspension and revocation of license.

**VIII. RESPONSIBILITY:**

- A. Commander, Coast Guard District/Station:**

1. Conduct regular inspection in order to determine whether the requirement is properly followed; and
2. Issue IAR to vessels found violating this Memorandum Circular:

**B. Asst. Chief of Staff for Navigational Safety (CG-10)**

Responsible for strict implementation of this Memorandum circular:

**C. Coast Guard Weapons Communications Electronics Information System (CGWCEISS)**

Maintain a file of all information cards of all purchases of EPIRB by Shipping companies and individual vessels

**D. Owner/Operator of Vessel:**

1. Responsible for having an EPIRB properly installed and operating on board their vessel : and
2. Ensure that copy of the information card that comes with the purchase of the EPIRB be properly filled out and submitted to PCG (Attn: CGWCEISS)

**IX. EFFECTIVITY:**

This Memorandum Circular will be implemented in the following phases and dates upon publication

- 1<sup>st</sup> phase -covering passenger vessels will take effect on 01 Jan 1995
- 2<sup>nd</sup> phase -covering cargo and tanker vessel will take effect on 01 April 1995
- 3<sup>rd</sup> phase -covering pleasure craft and small vessels will take effect on 01 July 1995

(SGD)

**DARIO T FAJARDO**  
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