

Success Stories

Two ACR EPIRBs Help Rescuers Locate Capsized Vendee Globe Racer

Press Release

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL - FEBRUARY 13, 2009 - Jean Le Cam, a sailor competing in the Vendee Globe solo round-the-world race, activated his ACR SATELLITE2 406 MHz EPIRB early on January 6th after his sailboat capsized in chilly seas, 200 miles west of Cape Horn. Even though Le Cam, 50, was trapped inside his overturned, carbon hull boat, the beacon's signal was accurately received through the hull by the COSPAS-SARSAT satellite tracking system.

The emergency signal received by COSPAS-SARSAT satellites was relayed to a ground receiving station, which determined Le Cam's location. A Chilean Search and Rescue (SAR) aircraft flew straight to the vessel's exact position and made a visual identification of the 60-foot boat. Authorities then diverted a nearby 180-ton petrol tanker to the scene. In rough sea conditions, swells of five meters and winds of 25-30 knots, the tanker could not safely execute a rescue.

Seven hours after his initial EPIRB activation, Le Cam decided to trigger his other ACR EPIRB, a GlobalFix 406 GPS unit, to inform rescuers that he was alive. Two fellow race competitors in two separate vessels used the position continuously received by COSPAS-SARSAT to sail to Le Cam's boat and assist in the rescue. The first sailor to arrive, Vincent Riou, shouted to Le Cam, who responded by signaling with a flag poking out of one of the boat's through-hull fittings.

Knowing that he was not alone, Le Cam, wearing a survival suit, escaped through an emergency escape hatch into the cold sea (43 F, 6 C). He followed the boat's structure as a guide and swam to the surface where he breathed fresh air. He was taken aboard and the Vendee Globe boats were routed to the nearest coast. With Le Cam safely sailing to dry land, the rescue operation by the Chilean Navy was called off.



Man Rescued from Boat Explosion off N.C.

USCG News Release
February 8, 2009

WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH, N.C. - A man was rescued 20 minutes after making a mayday call at 1:30 p.m. and reporting an explosion on board his 60-foot fishing vessel 20 nautical miles from Masonboro Inlet Sunday.

The captain of the Beau Vin expended all fire fighting capabilities and abandoned ship into his life raft with a 406 MHz Emergency Position Indication Radio Beacon (EPIRB).

Coast Guard Stations Wrightsville Beach and Oak Island launched rescue boat crews to the location received from the EPIRB. Coast Guard watchstanders also issued an urgent marine information broadcast to inform other mariners of his distress.

The captain of the Sea Swirl responded to the broadcast and came along side the life raft and picked up Beau Vin's captain.

The Station Oak Island crew arrived on scene and recovered the captain from the Sea Swirl. The captain was taken to Station Wrightsville Beach and met with EMS for minor burns on his hands, however he did not require any further medical assistance.

Coast Guard watchstanders are transmitting a Safety Marine Information Broadcast to notify other mariners of the abandon ship.



New Technology Assists in Local Rescue

USCG Feature Story Release
Jan. 30, 2009

CHARLESTON, S.C. - New technology associated with 406-MHz electronic position indicating radio beacon searches have been paying dividends throughout the country and recently played a significant role in a case off of South Carolina.

The sailing vessel Audrey communicated a mayday call on their VHF-FM marine radio at 6:01 a.m. January 25 after they became disabled 37-miles east off the coasts of North Carolina and South Carolina. Rescuers in Charleston heard the call and began the process of determining where the vessel was located and

what the nature of distress was. The Audrey's distance offshore made radio communications difficult to determine the nature of the distress call.

Since the vessel was without power and had torn their sails, the crew also manually energized their 406-MHz EPIRB. This sent a report that contained the EPIRB's code, along with a geographic position to a satellite 22,000 miles above the vessel. This information was transmitted to the United States Mission Control Center in Maryland and forwarded to the Coast Guard's command center in Miami for action. Since the Audrey's EPIRB had been properly registered and was up to date, rescuers were quickly able to determine specific information about the vessel.

A Coast Guard HH-65 Dolphin helicopter was launched from Air Facility Charleston to the GPS position. New direction finding equipment recently installed on the helicopter allowed the crew to pick up the GPS and hone in on the signal.

"We picked up the EPIRB signal at 25-miles, and at 11-miles we were able to lock onto the position," said Lt. Russ Mathis, the Air Station Savannah, Ga., pilot who flew on the rescue. This was the first operational use of the direction finding equipment on a rotary-wing asset.

The new direction finding equipment, the Rockwell Collins DF-430, was installed following almost

Greg Johnson receives the Secretary's Award for Excellence from the Department of Homeland Security for his research and efforts with 406 MHz emergency positioning indicating radio beacons. Coast Guard photo.

more than 10 years of research by Greg Johnson, Sector Charleston's commercial fishing vessel safety examiner. Johnson demonstrated that Coast Guard aviation assets could detect the 121.5-MHz signal, but they were having difficulty detecting the stronger 406-MHz signal. The DF-430 allows the pilots and crew to pick up the line of bearing to the 406-MHz signal itself, thus reducing the ambiguity involved.

"My research shows that the 406-MHz EPIRB, coupled with the new direction finding equipment aboard Coast Guard aviation platforms will dramatically increase the chances of someone in the water being located," said Johnson. "Anyone who goes out into the water without a 406-MHz EPIRB is taking an unnecessary risk."

Johnson began his research after a commercial fisherman he worked with complained that the helicopters kept flying right over him as he nearly froze in icy cold waters with his arms around the 406-MHz EPIRB following the sinking of his vessel. Since 1999, he has examined every single case in the Coast Guard launched an aircraft following a 406-MHz EPIRB signal receipt. After talking to

pilots involved in the searches and reviewing data, he determined that although the pilots were able to detect the EPIRB's 121.5-MHz homing signal, they were not able to detect the stronger 406-MHz signal with existing equipment. In 2007 Johnson received the Secretary's Award for Excellence from the Department of Homeland Security for his research and efforts.

In 2006 the Coast Guard initially invested \$2.6 million into outfitting its fixed-wing platforms, including the C-130 Hercules and ultimately the HU-25 Falcons, with the DF-430's. More recently, the Coast Guard began the installation on rotary-wing aircraft. The DF-430 has been directly involved in saving 43 lives since the Coast Guard began using it.

A boat crew from Coast Guard Station Wrightsville Beach, N.C., was vectored in by the helicopter crew and towed the Audrey and crew up the Cape Fear River, N.C. The boat crew then transferred the tow to a boat crew from Coast Guard Station Oak Island, N.C., and they towed them to a local marina.



EPIRB Helps Coast Guard Rescue Sailors

Lumina News
Friday, January 30, 2009

One of the most valuable pieces of equipment an offshore boater can have is a 406 MHz EPIRB (electronic position indicating radio beacon), which, when activated, broadcasts a signal with information to assist rescuers, including the vessel's location, the owner of the vessel and contact information.

On Sunday, one of the devices proved its worth as two crewmembers on a disabled sailboat were rescued 30 nautical miles off the North Carolina Coast.

A mayday call was received by Sector North Carolina early Sunday morning, followed by the EPIRB signal. Helicopters were dispatched from Elizabeth City and Savannah, Ga., and boats from Coast Guard stations in both Wrightsville Beach and Oak Island responded, as well.

"We got the call from Sector North Carolina," said BM2 Derek Cannoy of Station Wrightsville Beach. "They got a mayday call and an EPIRB hit, and they called us, and we responded. It was off of Frying Pan Shoals. Oak Island was on their way, and they wanted us to respond."

Cannoy said it took only a matter of minutes for Station Wrightsville Beach's 47-foot motor lifeboat to get under way.

“It really doesn’t take long at all,” he said. “The longest part is getting dressed. The water temp was less than 50, so we put on our drysuits — maybe 15 minutes total to get out of bed, get dressed out in drysuits and get going.”

The EPIRB signal was invaluable in the rescue, as the triangulated position of the mayday call provided a search area that was approximately 40 miles different than the actual position, said Petty Officer First Class Richard Hynson, a watchstander at the Fifth Coast Guard District command center.

“If it weren’t for the EPIRB, we would have been looking in a totally different area for them,” Hynson said.

Boaters should also try to provide as much information about their boat, situation and position as they can while making a mayday call in order to reduce search areas and response times.

The Coast Guard located the disabled vessel, a 36-foot sailboat called the Audrey, and Wrightsville Beach’s 47-footer was able to provide a tow. The boat’s sails were shredded, and she had lost power from her engine.

“They didn’t have any means of propulsion or any way to get back toward an inlet,” Cannoy said. “The seas were 4 to 6 feet on average, so it wasn’t that bad out there. There weren’t any injuries or medical conditions on board; they were in pretty good shape, so there was no need to pull them off the boat. It makes it easier to tow them if they have a rudder so they can steer behind us.”

When they reached the Cape Fear River, the tow was transferred to a boat crew from Coast Guard Station Oak Island, who towed the sailboat to a local marina.



Coast Guard Rescues Vessel Thanks to EPIRB

Submitted by [WWAY](#) on 26 January 2009

A 30-foot sailboat ended up almost 40 miles off shore with torn up sails and no power. If it wasn't for the distress call system they had on board, the search may have had a much different outcome.

The lost boat sent out a mayday through an Emergency Positioning Indication Radio Beacon, or EPIRB.

The EPIRB is a device the coast guard recommends all boaters have, because it uses satellites to send out the distress signal and can reach help no matter how far out on the water a vessel is.

EPIRB also provides information as to where a boat is, and who owns it. It was this information that made the difference in this weekends rescue.

Chris Parker, of the Wrightsville Beach Coast Guard, said, "With the use of the EPIRB, it saved their boat, saved their life and made the coast guards day a lot easier we get out there get back in and that was it."

Many boaters also use marine VHF radios to make distress calls. However, according to experts, these radios do not pin-point the vessels exact location, and they also don't work more than 10 miles offshore.

If you do want to have an EPIRB on your vessel, call your local boating store because most only keep a couple in stock.

The device is pricey, costing around \$900, but if you can afford it, it's a good tool to have.



Two Chignik Men Safe After Rescue from Remote Alaskan Island

USCG News Release
January 4, 2009

KODIAK, Alaska - Two men from Chignik, Alaska are safe after abandoning their fishing boat and being rescued by the Coast Guard from a remote Alaskan island in the North Pacific Ocean today.

Rescued were vessel master Jim Brewer, and crewman Jay Kingsley, who abandoned the 42-foot fishing vessel American Way after losing engine power.

The Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Center in Juneau, Alaska, received a 406 Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon signal at 3:03 p.m. from the vessel.

The Coast Guard used the registration information from the beacon and contacted the wife of the master. Prior to the EPIRB signal and during the transit from Kodiak to Chignik, the master of the vessel contacted his wife and reported he was near Sutwik Island in the western Shelikof Strait, three or four hours from Chignik. He was not in distress at that time.

At 3:41 p.m. the master of the vessel contacted the Coast Guard by satellite phone and reported that he and the other crewman were safe on the northernmost part of the Semidi Islands, southwest of Kodiak. The men took a life raft and reached shore about 100 feet away. With them they had food, warm clothes and fire starting materials.

An MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter was launched from Air Station Kodiak to rescue the two men from the island. Upon reaching the island the air crew spotted a fire the men had built to stay warm. At about 6:30 p.m. they were safely hoisted into the helicopter and flown to Chignik where the vessel is home ported.

Weather conditions at the time of the rescue were winds of 20 mph, seas of 13 feet and air temperature of 12 degrees.



Coast Guard Rescues 4, Credits EPIRB and Flares

December 21, 2008

The USCG rescued four from a sailboat south of Block Island, R.I., during a snowstorm.

The crew of the 45-foot Moonshine left East Greenwich, R.I., bound for Puerto Rico were caught in the storm which ripped the sails and disabled their motor.

The crew was able to activate the boat's Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) about 7 miles south of Block Island, enabling the Coast Guard to pick up the signal and track the stricken vessel's position.

The Coast Guard launched a 47-foot motor lifeboat rescue crew from Station Point Judith, R.I., and a helicopter crew from Air Station Cape Cod.

At about 1 a.m., both rescue crews arrived at the last position the EPIRB indicated, but winds as high as 40 knots were driving the sailboat faster than the beacon could transmit. Visibility was less than one mile and the seas were as high as 12 feet.

It was only when the crew of the Moonshine shot off a flare that the rescue crews located the disabled sailboat. The passengers were taken onboard the USCG cutter unharmed.

A Coast Guard command center spokesman in Boston said . "If they didn't have the EPIRB or flares, it would have been extremely hard to find them out there in the snow."



Lobster Boat Sinks on First Trip of Fall Season Life Raft Used Successfully

November 25, 2008

The first day of what was already shaping up to be a bad lobster fishing season was also the last for one vessel, which sank yesterday morning on its first trip out to drop its traps. Fundy Secrets was just a few kilometres out of Yarmouth, on Nova Scotia's southwestern tip, when it started taking on water, said Jeri Grychowski of the Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Halifax. "They couldn't keep ahead of the water coming in, so they abandoned the boat and got onto a life raft and they were able to put out some distress flares," she said. A call came into the centre, she said, "but before we could get a helicopter, the Cormorant, in the air, another fishing vessel picked them up." None of the four people on board the Fundy Secrets was injured.



Safety Gear Enables Quick Rescue

USCG Press Release
October 6, 2008

SOUTH PORTLAND, Maine - A Newcastle, Maine, man is home safe today because of survival equipment he carried with him while kayaking in the Sheepscot River, in Maine Sunday.

Robert Yarmey, of Newcastle, Maine, used a handheld radio to call the Coast Guard for help at 7:38 p.m., Sunday, when he was forced to swim to shore in 53-degree water after his kayak overturned near Reversing Falls in Sheepscot, Maine.

Once ashore, Yarmey informed the Sector Northern New England command center staff that he was handicapped and that he feared he was experiencing hypothermia. The command center staff continued to communicate with him on the radio while they reached out to the Newcastle Fire Department for help with the rescue since Coast Guard boats are too large to navigate through the Sheepscot River.

In addition to the radio, Yarmey was carrying a cell phone, a strobe light and a Personal Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon, which when activated transmitted his GPS coordinates to the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center. He was also wearing a bright yellow life jacket.

"Having the proper safety equipment is what saved Mr. Yarmey's life," said Senior Chief Petty Officer Joe Tallent, a search and rescue coordinator at Sector

Northern New England. "The electronic devices he used to communicate that he was in distress proved crucial in helping responders find him."

The Newcastle firemen saw Yarmey's strobe light flashing in the distance and were able to locate him about 30 minutes after his initial call for help. They transported him to an ambulance where he was evaluated and released without any injuries.



Two Rescued from Fishing Boat in Sitka Sound

The Fairbanks News-Miner
Tuesday, June 10, 2008

ANCHORAGE -- Two people were pulled from the waters of Sitka Sound after their fishing vessel sank Tuesday.

Kendall Didrickson and Courtney Cross were rescued by the crew of a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration research ship, the Rainier.

Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Levi Reed said the agency received a distress call at 9:10 a.m. from the pair on board the Crickett.

Didrickson and Cross, 15 miles offshore, said their boat was taking on water and they were abandoning ship.

The Coast Guard launched a helicopter from Sitka and broadcast a call for boats in the area to help.

The Rainier reached the pair at 9:30 a.m., Reed said.

Coast Guard Ensign Andrea Manuel told the Anchorage Daily News that Didrickson and Cross were wearing survival suits.

The boat went down in southern Sitka Sound about 17 nautical miles from Sitka.

Manuel said the vessel sank fast and the cause had not been determined.

The Crickett's home port was Sitka.



Two People Saved After Boat Sank

U.S. Coast Guard / Military.com

Saturday, June 7, 2008

NEW YORK-Two people were rescued from a life raft after their sportfishing vessel sank approximately nine miles off the coast of Moriches, N.Y., at about 5:45 p.m., today.

Greg Mastonardi, owner of the 33-foot Topaz sportfishing boat First Light, was transiting between Egg Harbor Inlet N.J., to Shinnecock Inlet, N.Y., with passenger Mark Edwards, when he called Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound to notify them his boat was taking on water and his dewatering pumps were having a difficult time keeping up. The Coast Guard instructed Edwards and the other passenger to put on their life jackets.

"We launched a 47-foot motor life boat from Coast Guard Station Shinnecock, a 27-foot rescue boat from Station Moriches, and a HH-60 rescue helicopter from Air Station Cape Cod immediately," said Peter Winters, a civilian search and rescue controller at Sector Long Island Sound.

Nine minutes later, Mastonardi notified search and rescue controllers at Sector Long Island Sound that water was overtaking the vessel and he was going to have to abandon ship.

"We asked them to activate their Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) right before we lost communications with them," said Winters. "Seatow overheard Mastonardi call to Sector Long Island Sound and told us they were nearby. We passed their position to Seatow and they headed towards the location."

Seatow arrived at 6:03 p.m. where they pulled Mastonardi and Edwards from their life raft to safety. The First Light sank in 108-feet of water.

The 27-foot rescue boat is currently escorting the Seatow vessel back to Coast Guard Sector Field Office Moriches to safely bring Mastonardi and Edwards.

The First Light was carrying 250 gallons of diesel fuel, though no pollution was reported on scene.

Winters attributes the timely success of this rescue to the alert mariners aboard Seatow, and the Coast Guard Rescue 21 system, which is

composed of two, 400-foot towers at Station Shinnecock and Coast Guard Station Montauk that are able to assist in cases just like this.

"We managed to get a latitude and longitude from them," said Winters. "After we lost communications with them we used Rescue 21 to create a fix on where they would be. It was right on the money."

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North Carolina Man Rescued After Two Days on Life Raft

The Norfolk Virginian-Pilot
Saturday, June 7, 2008

A North Carolina man floated on a life raft in the ocean for about two days without food or water before the U.S. Coast Guard found him Friday, the Coast Guard said in a statement.

Robert Brakes, 60, of Morehead City, was sailing off the coast of Cape Lookout Wednesday evening when his boat quickly began taking on water, the Coast Guard said.

According to the statement:

Brakes tried unsuccessfully to use his radio to call for help. The boat sank so quickly that he didn't have any way to take food, water or his distress beacon.

On Friday morning, the crew of the cruise ship Grandeur of the Seas reported seeing a capsized sailboat 102 miles southeast of Cape Lookout, and the Coast Guard began a search.

A Coast Guard crew from Elizabeth City in a C-130J aircraft searched the area. The crew saw debris and a life raft with a cover over it about 3:30 p.m.. They flew close to the raft several times and saw a person onboard it.

Brakes was hoisted onto a Jayhawk helicopter and flown to Carteret County General Hospital in Morehead City to be treated for mild hypothermia and dehydration, the Coast Guard said. He was released after treatment, a hospital spokeswoman said Saturday morning.

"Brakes said that he felt he would not be able to survive another day without food and water but knew he was going home after he saw the Coast Guard C-130 flying over his raft," Coast Guard Lt. j.g. Scott McGrew said in the statement.



Fishing Crew Rescued By Coast Guard

All Reported In Good Condition

POSTED: 6:10 am EDT May 27, 2008

BOSTON -- The U.S. Coast Guard rescued the three-member crew of a fishing vessel based in Rhode Island who had to abandon ship more than 180 miles southeast of Cape Cod.

The crew based in Point Judith, Rhode Island, sent a distress signal late Monday, saying their 82-foot "Dona Maria" was rapidly taking on water. The signal was picked up and relayed to the Coast Guard by sailing vessel "ING Coffey."

The crew were told to manually activate their Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon to enable the Coast Guard air crews to track their location. A Coast Guard Falcon jet arrived at the scene at about 7:20 p.m. and identified the location of the life raft. A Jayhawk helicopter arrived about 50 minutes later and hoisted the fishing crew aboard.

They were flown to Cape Cod and are all reported to be in good condition.



78-Year-Old Man on Life Raft Rescued After Fishing Boat Sinks

Staff report May 25, 2008

A 78-year-old man was rescued from an inflatable life raft Friday night after he reported his boat had sunk, U.S. Coast Guard officials said.

The man, whom officials could not identify Saturday, called for help on his handheld radio. He described his location as 13 miles west of the Lake Worth Inlet, but when Coast Guard officials tracked his location he actually was 15 miles north of there, Petty Officer Jennifer Johnson said.

A Coast Guard helicopter picked him up near Jupiter about 8:30 p.m., Johnson said.

The man told rescuers his boat hit something beneath the water and immediately took in water. He was alone in a 36-foot sport fisher called *Susie Q*. He hopped in the life raft and grabbed the radio and a flotation device.

The man suffered minor injuries but treated himself, Johnson said.

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Fisherman Wearing Immersion Suit Swept to Shore After Boat Sinks

Anchorage Daily News (03/23/08 00:24:36)

ICY STRAIT -- A man was rescued Saturday morning after his fishing boat sank in Icy Strait, according to the U.S. Coast Guard.

David Bailey was traveling alone on a 24-foot fishing boat, called a bar tender, when he called in Friday evening to report he was disabled in the strait.

The Coast Guard dispatched a helicopter, but before it could get to him, he called in again, saying the waves were washing over the boat, causing it to take on water. The waves were 3 to 6 feet at the time.

"Then we received a broken and garbled transmission that he was going down, and we lost contact with him after that," said Petty Officer Joe Castro in Juneau.

The helicopter searched for him but found only some debris, Castro said

Early Saturday, another fishing boat spotted Bailey on the beach at Lemesurier Island, about 90 miles west of Juneau.

He was wearing a survival suit when his boat capsized. The current caught him and delivered him to shore, Castro said.

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The Anchorage Daily News (www.adn.com)

LSA Equipment Credited for Saving Lives

Excerpts from the Seattle Times

By the time the Warrior pulled close to its sister ship's position, the Ranger's crew had abandoned ship. While some made it into life rafts, others floated haplessly in frigid waters, their beacons flashing in the blackness.

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Besides Cook, 58, of San Diego, the victims were skipper Eric Peter Jacobsen, 66, of Lynnwood; first mate David Silveira, of San Diego; and crew member Byron Carillo.

The four helped others off the boat before finally heading overboard, perhaps preventing further loss of life. All four men were in the water for at least six hours and died of hypothermia, officials said.

The captain of the Coast Guard cutter that rescued 20 survivors described a harrowing several hours in which helicopters hovered precariously to pluck survivors from the sea.

"The big issue was just locating them in the water, in the darkness," said Capt. Craig Lloyd of the 378-foot cutter Munro. "It was an amazing scene."

Lloyd credited the Alaska Ranger's crew members with aiding in their own survival by getting in survival suits and staying together as much as the rough seas would allow.

"They did all the right things. They deserve credit for following the training they had," Lloyd said.

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The cause of the sinking is under investigation.

"Some of them, when they were brought on board, were severely hypothermic," he said, adding that some had been in the water about two hours. "We got them out of their survival suits and their wet clothing, set up blankets and heaters and gave first aid. We gave them shirts and shorts and jackets, books and Bibles and playing cards. We've been able to put many of them in touch with family members."



EPIRB Credited with Major Reason for Saving Lives Following Ship Sinking off Guam -- 13 rescued, 3 deceased, 6 missing

The US Coast Guard issued a press release stating that a log-carrying ship sank in the North Pacific Ocean 375 miles northwest of Guam. The ship's emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) alerted authorities to the distress and its location. Coast Guard and Navy aircraft, a Coast Guard cutter, and various commercial vessels diverted to the scene. Ten crewmembers were rescued; twelve were missing. A second press release states that three additional crewmembers were rescued and three bodies were recovered. A third press release states that the search for the six missing crewmembers has been suspended.



LIFE RAFT SAVES MAN ON BURNING R.I. FISHING VESSEL

Chris Lutyens, escaped in a life raft and called Coast Guard Station Castle Hill by cell-phone, reporting the Lucy, a Jamestown-based boat, on fire south of Lands End, R.I. the only person aboard the Lucy when it burst into flames, was taken aboard a 25-foot response boat from Station Castle Hill, transported to the Jamestown pier and transferred by awaiting Jamestown EMS to Newport Hospital for follow-up treatment.

"Since Mr. Lutyens had a life raft aboard and the knowledge of how to use it, he was able to safely evacuate the vessel and call for help. We strongly urge all boaters to ensure they have operable emergency equipment when planning to be at sea," said Petty Officer Jason Ronin of Station Castle Hill.



U. S. Coast Guard Rescues Man After EPIRB Alert

The Coast Guard on 20 July 2007, rescued a vessel in distress in northern Lake Michigan after the operator activated his Electronic Position Indicating Radio Beacon.

William S. Cooper was returning to Glenview, Ill. in a 33-foot sailing vessel Talisman after participating in a sailing race when his boat's mast collapsed in heavy seas. His radio was malfunctioning and his cell phone had no service, so he activated his EPIRB at approximately 6:40 a.m.

An HH65 dolphin rescue helicopter from Air Station Traverse City arrived on-scene at approximately 8:02 a.m.

The positive results of this incident are attributed to Cooper's use of the 406MHz EPIRB, which reduced Coast Guard response time.

Boaters who have not already done so should consider purchasing a 406 MHz EPIRB. The 406 MHz EPIRB provides a more reliable and accurate beacon than the 121.5/243 MHz EPIRB which is being phased out. 121.5/243 MHz EPIRBs are no longer sold and satellite detection and processing of distress signals on those frequencies will terminate on 1 February 2009.