

**WHEN IT IS TIME TO CALL FOR HELP
WHO DO YOU CALL?
HOW DO YOU CALL?**

By Dan Pavlat – Given at Spring Safety Seminar of 2012

CELL PHONE	Poor coverage and they do not mix with water
TRACKERS	Stick on the boat and go, continuous updates
ELT's	Aircraft only
EPIRB's	Made for the water environment. Category 1 or 2 Helps find boats or life rafts and people in the area
Mini B	121.5MHz/243 MHz Crewed races with directional locator on board Line of sight technology Obsolete???? No USCG response after 2/2009
PLBs	Personal Locator Beacons Legally adapted in US July 1, 2003 Originally designed for land use

PLBs - DEVICES SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO FIND/HELP PEOPLE

SPOT Globalstar satellite messenger,
GEOS International Emergency Response Center
Functions: Check In, Tracking, Message, Ask for Help, 911
Cost - \$120 to \$170

SPOT Plus Features

- Low cost for unit
- Owner battery change capability
- 10 person update allowed
- Message capability

SPOT Drawbacks

- Yearly fees
- Add \$100/yr for satellite subscription
- Add \$50/yr for track progress
- Add \$10/yr for Search and Rescue Benefit
- 3 feet immersion for 30 minutes, 10 Foot maximum
- Response delay time through GEOS
- Coverage offshore
- Battery life
- Privately maintained satellite system

PLBs DEVICES SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO FIND/HELP PEOPLE

PLB's Personal Locator Beacons
 COSPAS/SARSAT Government based satellite system
 Functions 406 MHz plus 121.5 MHz local find

Two main manufacturers

McMurdo, based in Portsmouth England has several versions of the FastFind

200/201 121.5MHz only
210 Low cost 406 MHz \$215-\$245 at 5.3 oz.
FastFind Max \$380-\$430
FastFind MaxG \$490-\$550 at 10 Oz.

ACR based in Fort Lauderdale Florida

ResQLink Mainly for land
AquaLink A ResQLink with greater waterproofing \$340-\$380
AqaLink View Adds digital display \$400-\$450

Latest upgrades

6.3 Watt power vs previous max of 5 watts
Longer battery life but 9.2 oz.
Improved waterproofing
Added strobe light
Display with L/L, battery life,
Flotation collars

MUSTS WITH PLBS

- You must register your PLB and list contacts
- Inform your contacts of your plans
- You must keep the registration up to date
- You must replace the battery on schedule
- Once activated you must leave the unit on until rescued
- If you accidentally activate the unit you must contact the USCG
888-212-7283 also found at www.SARSAT.NOAA.gov
- Periodically test your unit
- 99.5MHz radio test for warble
- Stolen los tor sold, notify NOAA

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Non hazardous batteries to allow shipping by normal mail
- 17 year service per US law
- 12 year max service for last battery replacement
- CHECK FOR CRACKS
- Must have internal GPS
- Must manually deploy
- Keep it dry
- Must have an unobstructed view of the sky
- Must deploy the antennae
- Probably will have to hold overhead out of the water

PLBs ARE THEY WORTH IT? WITHOUT A DOUBT!
BOTTOM LINE – YOUR LAST HOPE IF YOU LOSE YOUR BOAT
JUST DON'T GET OVERCONFIDENT WHEN WEARING ONE