



South African Maritime Safety Authority

Ref: SM6/5/2/1

Date: 16 October 2012

Marine Notice No. 28 of 2012

Radio Life Saving Equipment and EPIRB' Batteries

TO MASTERS, SHIP OWNERS, MARINE RADIO EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS, THEIR AGENTS, REGIONAL MANAGERS, PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OTHER INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES

Marine Notice No. 9 of 2012 is cancelled

Summary

This Marine Notice serves to stress the importance of using manufacturer specified batteries for marine Radio Life Saving Equipment and EPIRB electronic equipment powered by replaceable batteries.

EPIRB, SART and VHF hand held batteries.

These important safety devices are all powered by Lithium batteries which have a limited shelf life. To ensure that the units have sufficient power to operate efficiently the manufacturers are obliged to provide each battery with an expiry date which ensures that the batteries are replaced timeously.

A growing trend has been observed where batteries are being repacked using batteries not compliant with the manufacturer's specification. Some of these batteries have been found to be faulty and without expiry dates.

This means that the type approval of the equipment is invalid and therefore not acceptable as safety equipment.

Service agents are hereby advised that every battery replacement carried out on these units shall make use of manufacturer specified batteries and written proof of this fact is to be provided to the vessel. This document or a copy thereof is to be available at all times for inspection by a surveyor.

Radio surveyors will be inspecting EPIRB's, SART's and VHF hand held radios to ensure that the correct batteries are fitted. Where it is found that non-manufacturer battery packs are fitted, the surveyor will note this fact as a serious defect.

This will lead to the local general safety certificate not being issued.

Where this defect is noted during an ad-hoc inspection, the vessel will be detained.

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