



Media Release

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Online distress beacon registration launched at Melbourne Boat Show

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) now has an online facility for distress beacon registration. This means that everyone with a 406 MHz beacon can now register their details via a simple online process in the comfort of their own homes – registration is free.

AMSA is responsible for the coordination of all aviation and maritime search and rescue within Australia's search and rescue region – an area of over 52 million square kilometres.

AMSA's Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) – Australia is located in Canberra and all satellite alerts from distress beacons are received and acted upon from the RCC. RCC personnel task aviation, land-based and maritime assets to assist with search and rescue responses.

By registering a beacon with AMSA and providing details of the vessel, aircraft or person which the beacon belongs to and a list of emergency contacts, rescue authorities can very quickly determine if the activation of a particular beacon is a real distress situation or an inadvertent activation. Additionally, the RCC can task the most suitable assets for a rescue response.

If you already have a 406 MHz distress beacon, or you are planning on purchasing one, ensure you visit the Australian 406 Beacon Register at www.beacons.amsa.gov.au, so the RCC is best equipped to respond to your distress situation. Registration stickers will be issued by AMSA to all registered distress beacon owners and should be adhered to your beacon to provide proof of registration.

Distress beacon owners should check with their local maritime authority with regard to legislative requirements for registration in each State. For example, carriage and registration of 406 MHz beacons is mandatory in NSW from 1 July 2008 and in QLD from 1 November 2008.

Remember – the satellite that monitors old analogue 121.5 MHz distress beacons will be switched off on 1 February 2009. You must ensure you have a 406 MHz distress beacon well before this date.

More information on distress beacons can be accessed at www.amsa.gov.au/beacons or by calling the beacon help line 1800 406 406. AMSA personnel will also be on site at Stand E16 at the Melbourne Boat Show between 3-7 July 2008 to assist with online registrations.

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