

BAHAMAS MARITIME AUTHORITY

BMA INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 6

GMDSS - EPIRB REGISTRATION

All flag states are required to maintain a database for EPIRBs on their ships in order that immediate contact can be made with the manager or owner in the event of an EPIRB alert. The database for EPIRBs on Bahamian registered vessels is currently maintained by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency at MRCC Falmouth in the United Kingdom, and this arrangement will continue.

In order that the database is properly maintained and updated, the Bahamas Maritime Authority forwards to Falmouth the essential information for inclusion in the database. The information in the database for each ship includes the name and contact details of the shipmanager, call sign and MMSI number, and EPIRB particulars. Shipmanagers are requested to ensure that this Authority is advised of any changes in this information in order that the database may be amended as necessary. This is most important as lives could be put at risk if the database is not kept up to date.

Shipowners, shipmanagers, shipmasters and authorised classification societies and inspectors are also reminded that EPIRBs on Bahamian registered ships should be programmed with the MMSI number, which is allocated on request by the Authority. They should not be programmed with the call sign or any other number as this will preclude their inclusion in the database at Falmouth MRCC.

Shipowners and shipmanagers should also note that the issue of SELCAL numbers has been discontinued. The MMSI number should be used to programme any equipment requiring the identity of the ship on which it is carried.