
4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT
LONDON SE1 7SR
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611 Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210

MSC.1/Circ.1660
28 November 2022

**GUIDANCE ON THE TRAINING ON AND OPERATION OF
EMERGENCY PERSONAL RADIO DEVICES
IN MULTIPLE CASUALTY SITUATIONS**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its 106th session (2 to 11 November 2022), approved the *Guidance on the training on and operation of emergency personal radio devices in multiple casualty situations* (the Guidance), as set out in the annex, prepared by the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue, at its ninth session (21 to 30 June 2022).

2 The Guidance is intended to minimize harm to search and rescue communications and operations by emergency personal radio devices (EPRDs) in multiple casualty situations.

3 Member States are invited to use the annexed Guidance and bring it to the attention of all parties concerned.

ANNEX**GUIDANCE ON THE TRAINING ON AND OPERATION OF EMERGENCY
PERSONAL RADIO DEVICES IN MULTIPLE CASUALTY SITUATIONS**

1 The following should be included and addressed in the safety management system pursuant to the International Safety Management (ISM) Code for events that could require a multiple casualty evacuation.

2 Crew should be aware of the following characteristics of emergency personal radio devices (EPRDs):*

- .1 EPRDs generally transmit two different radio signals:
 - .1 an alerting signal either to trigger an alarm on a bridge or, alternatively, at a rescue coordination centre; and
 - .2 a locating signal to help rescuers get within visual range;
- .2 EPRDs should be worn or attached to a person in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance;
- .3 EPRDs may be armed to automatically activate (transmit) on immersion or manually activated;
- .4 EPRDs commonly have indicators to show they are transmitting;
- .5 most EPRDs require a clear line of sight to the sky because they fix their position from satellite signals;
- .6 if the aerial is underwater, an EPRD cannot transmit or receive radio signals; and
- .7 when many EPRDs are activated in the same area, they can prevent SAR services from using the locating signals effectively and harm on-scene radiocommunications by causing repeated audible alarms on older radio receivers.

3 Passengers on board should be briefed on the following aspects of the use of EPRDs during specific safety and emergency training:

- .1 ship systems will make the necessary distress signals to initiate rescue action;
- .2 an EPRD should never be activated except by a person in the water or on instruction from the ship's crew;
- .3 an active EPRD should be switched off as soon as the wearer is out of the water or out of immediate danger; and
- .4 this information may be reinforced by signage at muster stations.

* Examples of an EPRD may include man overboard (MOB) devices, personal locator beacons (PLB), maritime survivor locating devices (MSLD) and other radio devices providing the functionality described in paragraph 2.1. See resolution A.1106(29) on *Revised guidelines for the onboard operational use of shipborne automatic identification systems (AIS)*.

4 Persons with designated responsibility for the safety of persons in emergency situations should ensure EPRDs are not activated for persons getting into survival craft prior to deployment.

5 Persons responsible for a survival craft, once deployed, should ensure that all EPRDs remain switched off for anyone aboard a survival craft, including persons recovered from the water. Where a survival craft has lost contact with other survival craft and is not equipped with an emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) or AIS search and rescue transmitter (AIS-SART), then an EPRD may be used to help locate the survival craft.
