

M.S. Notice 18 of 1998

Subject : False Distress Alerts from 406 MHz EPIRB.

In continuation of M. S. Notice 5 & 14 of 1998 the Directorate General of Shipping is concerned with the excessive number of false distress alerts which are being detected frequently. The false distress alerts impose a considerable & unnecessary burden on Rescue Coordination Centers (RCCs). These may have adverse effects on seafarers' confidence in the GMDSS and could also have a potentially serious impact on a real distress situation and on safety of life at sea.

In this connection, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has adopted Resolution A.814(19).

The Directorate General of Shipping urges all ship owners to ensure that EPIRBs fitted on board their ships comply with the GUIDELINES FOR AVOIDING FALSE DISTRESS ALERTS as annexed to the above-referred Resolution.

In this connection, ship owners' attention is specially invited to Guideline 2.4 of the above-referred Resolution.

"MANUFACTURERS, SUPPLIERS AND INSTALLERS SHOULD: ENSURE THAT THE SATELLITE EPIRB POSITION ON BOARD, INSTALLATIONS (INCLUDING THE RELEASE AND ACTIVATION MECHANISMS) AND HANDLING PROCEDURES PRECLUDE UNWANTED ACTIVATION (DESIGNING THE EPIRB SO THAT WHEN IT IS OUT OF ITS BRACKET IT MUST ALSO BE IMMERSSED IN WATER TO ACTIVATE AUTOMATICALLY, AND SO THAT, WHEN OPERATED MANUALLY, A TWO-STEP ACTIVATION ACTION IS REQUIRED) "

**Sd/-
(Capt. R. K. Awasthi)
Nautical Surveyor**