

EPIRB antenna failures

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The attached note provides details of defects identified by the US Coast Guard in antennae on EPIRBs (emergency position indicating radio beacons), caused by internal corrosion.

Marine Safety, Security and Environmental Protection **SAFETY ALERT - EPIRB ANTENNAE FAILURES** September 10, 2002 Washington, DC

The USCG Marine Safety Office Honolulu has recently reported that a high percentage of antennas equipped to Satellite 406 Cat I EPIRBs, product number 2754, manufactured by ACR Electronics Incorporated have failed during dockside examinations of Commercial Fishing Vessels.

On several occasions the antenna's outer rubber coating was discovered ripped or torn. Closer inspection often revealed extensive internal corrosion. Other antennas showed no perforations on the outer rubber coating but displayed bulges on the antennae near its base. Upon closer inspection when the bulging area was sliced open, total wastage of the antennae interior was revealed.

It is reported that evidence of a corrosion failure may be discovered when the antenna is unscrewed from the EPIRB body assembly. Rusty liquid dripping from the antenna or moisture present inside the threaded section are tell tale signs of failing equipment.

ACR Electronics has acknowledged receipt of the failed antennas and has initiated a study to determine the cause and scope of the problem. ACR is committed to support its safety products and will replace damaged antennas at no cost to the owner. Should you encounter similar problems with your vessel's 2754 EPIRB antenna, contact ACR Electronics Customer Service Representatives at (800) 432-0227, ext. 110 to receive a replacement antenna.

The Coast Guard strongly recommends that vessel operators carefully inspect their EPIRB antennas - particularly if it is manufactured by ACR Electronics Incorporated.



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