

NEW VHF DEVICE TO IMPROVE RESCUE TIME IN MAN OVERBOARD EMERGENCY

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Sanctuary Cove, 22 May 2008 (Pavilion C, stand no. 276-277)



Mobilarm V100

Australian marine technology innovator, Mobilarm, will launch its new marine safety product into Australia and New Zealand at the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show, 22 – 25 May 2008. The Mobilarm V100 is designed to provide all mariners with a faster, more efficient man overboard (MOB) rescue system than conventional personal EPIRB devices.

The Mobilarm V100 is a fully automated, position indicating radio beacon that transmits a MOB distress call via VHF DSC and VHF voice to all VHF radio equipped vessels and land based receivers within range, including the distressed mariner's vessel. The pocket-sized device is attached to clothing or lifejackets and will automatically activate when the wearer has gone overboard, sending out a distress call and real time GPS coordinates of the casualty's current position.

The Mobilarm V100 automatically sends out the initial 'Mayday, Man Overboard' alarm via DSC data using VHF DSC channel 70. As soon as a GPS lock is obtained by the integrated 24 channel GPS receiver, usually within 30 seconds, the device transmits the distress call again, complete with position coordinates. The message is repeated at regular intervals to update the rescuers on the current position of the person in the water, which continues until

the device is deactivated; the Mobilarm V100 battery will support transmission for at least 18 hours in normal conditions. The device also incorporates a strobe light to assist in visual homing of the casualty.

All commercial vessels are equipped by law with VHF DSC radio, but only a small proportion of recreational vessels carry the capability. Therefore, in order to ensure that as many vessels as possible receive the distress message in an emergency, the same 'Mayday, Man Overboard' alert is simultaneously broadcast in a synthesized voice on VHF marine radio channel 16.

Commenting on the launch, CEO of Mobilarm Lindsay Lyon, explained how the Company's new VIPRB technology provides significant advantages over current personal EPIRB products. "The probability of survival in a man overboard situation is directly related to the length of time the person spends in the water. Conventional marine personal locating beacons, such as the personal 406 EPIRB, must be manually activated to send a signal, which may be difficult or impossible to do if the person is injured or unconscious. Furthermore, a personal EPIRB transmits its emergency signal to an onshore location, which may introduce preventable delay in rescuing the man overboard and greatly reduce their chances of survival."

Sending an emergency signal to nearby vessels, rather than an onshore location, means that the other people on board, who are usually in the best position to carry out a rescue, are alerted and deployed virtually immediately. This reduces the casualty's time in the water and represents a quantum improvement in their chances of survival.

The key benefit to the Mobilarm V100 is that as long as a VHF radio is onboard, no other equipment need be installed. Unlike 121.5 MHz direction finding beacons and satellite locating systems which demand dedicated receiving base stations, direction finding equipment or satellite time rental, the Mobilarm V100 uses only existing industry standard VHF marine radio networks, making it an easy and cost-effective addition to a vessel's safety equipment.

“Improving the safety of mariners out at sea is the driving force behind the development of this product,” added Mr Lyon. “Nothing can or should replace good seamanship and a responsible attitude to crew safety. But if the worst should happen and a crew member goes overboard, it’s vital that the rest of the crew are alerted to it without delay. If no man overboard monitoring system is already in place, then using the Mobilarm V100 means that the message will get back to the boat within seconds, and the crew will be able to accurately track and locate the casualty regardless of how far they drift from the point they went overboard.”

The Mobilarm V100 is suitable for use in any maritime application and is a highly cost effective, practical life saving device that vastly improves location and recovery in a MOB situation. The product will be available through selected dealers, alongside other Mobilarm safety products, throughout the world from July 2008.

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Notes for editors:

Based in Perth, Western Australia, Mobilarm is the world leader in electronic marine safety products that protect and save lives in man overboard emergencies for commercial and recreational mariners. Available online and through a global network of dealers and distributors, Mobilarm’s award-winning products are specifically designed to improve the

workplace safety environment for all mariners, by providing an instant alert to vessel and crew in the event of man overboard.

The company's Australian and International awards include the Australian Design Award and the winner of the Seatrade Safety at Sea Award, the first such award given to an Australian company.