

July 20, 2017

## **NOAA Satellite Search and Rescue Program, SARSAT to talk about Preventing False Alerts at EAA AirVenture 2017 in Oshkosh, WI**

OSHKOSH, Wisconsin — The NOAA Search and Rescue Satellite Aided Tracking (SARSAT) program will be at the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) AirVenture 2017 Aviation Celebration to talk about preventing Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) false alerts that occur in the United States.

A false alert is a non-distress activation of a 406 MHz emergency beacon (ELT, PLB, or EPIRB). In 2016, 6,230 ELT false alerts occurred in the U.S. Search and Rescue (SAR) region and as a consequence rescue personnel were required to respond immediately to each of those activations. That response will only stop when it has been proven that the activation was a false alert. The simplest and quickest way for SAR forces to confirm a false alert and confirm that a person is not in distress is to contact the person who accidentally set off the ELT using information from their ELT registration. Every false alert has the potential to put rescuers in harm's way and waste valuable resources.

**Join SARSAT at the Federal Pavilion, Booth 4,  
to learn how you can help prevent false alerts.**

### **Recommendations to Help Prevent False Alerts:**

- In 2016, the majority of 406 MHz ELT false alerts occurred during testing and maintenance. Always ensure you are conducting self tests and annual tests according to the manufacturer's instructions for your ELT.
- Register your ELT at <http://www.beaconregistration.noaa.gov>. The simplest and quickest way for SAR forces to confirm a false alert and confirm that you are not in distress is to phone the person who accidentally set off the ELT. They do this using the information provided by the beacon owner in the NOAA SARSAT Beacon Registration Database system. Please register today and keep your contact information up-to-date once you register.
- If you realize you have accidentally activated your beacon, call the U.S. Air Force Rescue Coordination Center at 1-800-851-3051 with your beacon HEX ID ready to cancel the false alert. This helps to protect Search and Rescue personnel that would otherwise be out looking for you during an actual emergency.

**Who:** NOAA Search and Rescue Satellite Aided Tracking (SARSAT) Program

**What:** Learn, Discover, and Explore the SARSAT program. Learn about strategies to help prevent ELT false alerts through hands-on demonstrations. Question and answer sessions about ELT registration.

**When:** Monday, 24 July 2017 to Sunday, 30 July 2017

**Where:** EAA AirVenture 2017, Oshkosh, Wisconsin; Federal Pavilion, Booth 4

SARSAT (the U.S. component of the international COSPAS-SARSAT satellite system) is managed and operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

When a NOAA satellite finds the location of a distress signal, the information is relayed to the SARSAT Mission Control Center based at NOAA's Satellite Operations Facility in Suitland, Maryland. From there, the information is sent to a Rescue Coordination Center, operated by either the U.S. Air Force for land rescues, or the U.S. Coast Guard for water rescues. For alerts

outsider of the United States search and rescue region they are distributed to international rescue coordination centers in more than 40 countries that participate in the Cospas-Sarsat international program.

Since its inception in 1982, COSPAS-SARSAT has been credited with saving thousands of lives in the U.S. and around the world. In 2017 alone (as of July 1), SARSAT has helped save 131 people from potentially life-threatening situations throughout the U.S. and its surrounding waters. The satellite system tracks and locates activated emergency beacons carried by ships, aircraft, and individuals in distress. It is a way of signaling for help when all other means of communication have failed. In many instances, this system has proven to be the last resort for people in trouble at sea or in the wilderness.

*Contact Lieutenant Junior Grade Nate Gilman, NOAA SARSAT Operations Officer, with any questions or concerns at (301) 817-4757 or OPS.SARSAT@NOAA.GOV*