If you fall overboard, you'll need to raise an alarm and ensure that you can be located. Devices such as personal locator beacons (PLB) or man overboard (MOB) devices can assist in your rescue. These radio devices can perform two functions:

- **Alerting** - tells someone that you are in distress but will not necessarily provide ongoing information about your location.
- **Locating** - helps rescuers to find you but will not necessarily alert them to your distress.

Types of technology

The communication technology used by the device will have an impact on:

- The effective range of the signals
- Who receives the signals
- Its use for alerting and locating

Ensure you are also meeting the carriage requirements for 406 MHz devices which apply to your vessel

Personal Emergency Radio Devices often combine multiple technologies, allowing them to carry out both the Alerting and Locating functions. Check the device description for this information.

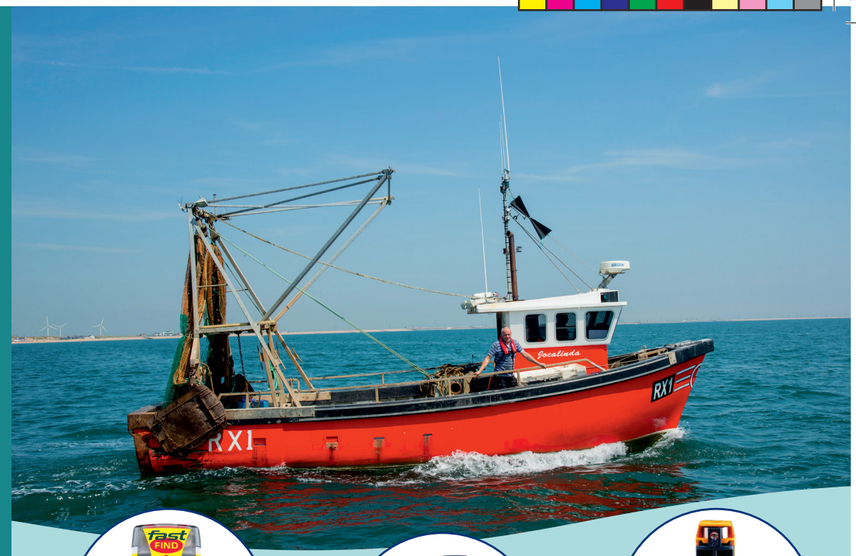
	Does it raise an audible alarm?	Does it help rescuers find me in the last mile?	What range does it have?	Can other vessels receive it?
406 MHz Cospas-Sarsat	Yes - with RCC (Coastguard)	Yes - UK rescue helicopters can use DF to find casualty	Worldwide	No
DSC	Yes - on DSC receivers in range, inc. Coastguard	No - initial GNSS position only	Line of sight	Most but not all carry DSC receivers
AIS	Sometimes	Yes - regularly updates GNSS position	Line of sight	Some carry AIS receivers

Maritime & Coastguard Agency

Technical Services Ship Standards
The Maritime and Coastguard Agency
fishing@mcga.gov.uk

Photos and source diagrams courtesy of McMurdo and Ocean Signal. The photos in this leaflet are for illustrative purposes only. Other devices available.

MCA/313



Personal Emergency Radio Devices for Commercial Fishing

Maritime & Coastguard Agency

Choosing your device

You will need to decide what combination of technology suits the way you work.

Consider

- Where will your vessel be operating, how far from shore?
- Most people who fall overboard are rescued by their own vessel, or nearby vessels assist. Will you be fishing in a group, or near to any other vessels?
- Will you be fishing solo or as part of a crew?
- If there was an incident, would there be a competent person on board capable of recovering an unconscious person from the water?

Using your device

Before Use

Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully when setting up your device.

If your device is a 406 MHz beacon you must register it with the Coastguard and keep your registration up to date. These details are used by the Coastguard in an emergency to help plan a response and inform your emergency contacts.

Registration and updates are available online at: gov.uk/406beacon

Familiarise yourself with how to attach the device to a person, how to deploy the antenna if necessary, and how to activate it.

During Use

Make sure that you attach your device to your lifejacket and that you wear it at all times whilst on deck. These personal emergency devices only work when the aerial is above the water.

If you inadvertently activate your device when there is no distress situation, switch it off immediately and contact the Coastguard.

Solo crew

	Inshore - Busy*	Inshore - Quiet	Offshore
Alerting Technology			
406 MHz	●	●	●
DSC	●	●	●
AIS	●	●	●
Locating Technology			
406 MHz	●	●	●
AIS	●	●	●

2 or more competent crew

	Inshore - Busy*	Inshore - Quiet	Offshore
Alerting Technology			
406 MHz	●	●	●
DSC	●	●	●
AIS	●	●	●
Locating Technology			
406 MHz	●	●	●
AIS	●	●	●

- ● Option to be considered
- ● Other option to be considered, but probably not the most suitable
- ● Not likely to be suitable in your situation

*busy location means a location within range of numerous vessels with suitable receiving equipment, or within range of a Coastguard antenna.

Testing

Devices should be tested in accordance with the manufacturer's methods at recommended intervals.

Disposing of your device

You should follow the manufacturer's guidance. As a minimum, you should remove the batteries to avoid false activations and for registered devices, inform the UK Beacon Registry.