

RECOMMENDED ACTION BY FAA: Emergency Locator Beacon Changes

The present ELTs were mandated in 1970 as a low cost, political panic reaction and although subsequently improved, still leave much desired and should be replaced by similar units operating on 406MHz units now available. The present ELTs are NOT good insurance for saving lives.

The present units have a high rate of false signals (AFRCC/Langley verbal report) , have a long time before response or location, and are not as widely monitored as imagined. Their prime advantage is low cost.

Somewhat similar units operating on 406MHz have been used both in marine activities and in Alaska with outstanding results because the individual unit is registered and is monitored by satellite which transmits GPS coordinates to Search & Rescue (SAR) station. Unfortunately, some SAR locations (ie, Colorado) fail to recognize the cost saving efficiencies, while others (ie, USAF) would refuse to respond to a marine unit not near the ocean! Seldom do many of these agencies even request the available registration information for initial or followup contact.

The FAA should expedite an ELT operating on 406MHz to save both lives and money! Existing FCC action could have such units available this year! Why do we need to wait longer when the answer is obvious?