



# South African Maritime Safety Authority

Ref: SM6/5/2/1  
SM12/1/1

Date: 7 August 2018

## Marine Notice No. 27 of 2018

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### SAMSA Recommendation – use of an Identifier Unit for Maritime Safety

TO ALL REGIONAL MANAGERS, PRINCIPAL OFFICERS, SAMSA SURVEYORS, SHORE BASED RADIO TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDERS, RADIO DEALERS, SHIP OWNERS, MANAGERS, OPERATORS, SKIPPERS, CREW, SAFETY OFFICERS AND AFFECTED PARTIES

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#### *Summary*

This Marine Notice-

- (a) Recommends the utilisation of Autonomous Maritime Radio Devices (AMRD) for Search and Rescue purposes; the Identifier unit falls within this category;
- (b) Recommends the usage of the Identifier to eliminate the 'Search' component from Search and Rescue Operations;
- (c) Advises that there are other AMRDs available but subject to SAMSA approval for utilisation; there are devices available that do not operate on the recognised frequencies and the MRCC / SAMSA system cannot detect these devices in cases of emergencies.

1. SAMSA recommends the utilisation of the Identifier unit for small vessels, in the interest of safety of life at sea and maritime safety.
2. The purpose of using the Identifier unit is to ensure an efficient rescue when the fisher/boater has an emergency. Also, the vessel will be detected by larger vessels, especially in restricted visibility (fog) thus ensuring the safety of the fishers/boaters. The information remains confidential when used by the MRCC / SAMSA.
3. The Identifier units are being made available, at no cost to the Fisher/Skipper, for the use on small vessels and others, as deemed necessary. The Identifier must be switched on whenever the vessel heads out to sea to ensure that the unit operates properly.
4. The Identifier is an AIS type device that may be manually charged on shore, or connected to a vessel's 12 Volt battery supply (for slightly bigger vessels).
5. The use of the Identifier will enable the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC) to determine the position of the distressed vessel, or the last time the vessel's position was detected –when an ALERT is triggered. The use of the Identifier will greatly assist with the Search and Rescue operation.
6. Each vessel will be allocated a dedicated Identifier, however, it may be exchanged for another unit with SAMSA should it appear to be faulty, at no cost to the user. Of course, the provision of the Identifier is subject to availability, as there is a limited supply.
7. The Identifiers remain the property of SAMSA as the MMSI numbers used in programming these Identifiers are in SAMSA's name and also the related ICASA costs. SAMSA will determine the distribution process of the Identifiers. In the event that the supplied Identifier has not been switched on for an extended period, SAMSA reserves the right to retrieve the unit and provide it to another Fisher/Boater who has requested an Identifier.

8. It must be stated that SAMSA's MRCC will only seek the vessel in the event of an ALERT being triggered by the Identifier. The MRCC's focus is safety of life at sea and has no interest in fishers' favourite fishing spots.
9. Fishers/Skippers or Fishing Community Leaders should contact their nearest SAMSA office for more related information or to register their request for an Identifier unit(s). Thereafter, a suitable date will be arranged to set-up a meeting with the Fishers and community to explain the purpose of the device and to demonstrate how to operate the Identifier for the Fishers' safety at sea.

Enquiries regarding the contents of this Marine Notice may be directed to [fishingunit@samsa.org.za](mailto:fishingunit@samsa.org.za)

**7 August 2018**

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**SM12/1/1**

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