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of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

InFO

Information for Operators

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http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info

An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.

Subject: Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Accessibility and Carriage

Purpose: This InFO alerts operators that operate aircraft equipped with ELTs that are required for extended over-water operations (14 CFR part 121, §121.339) that such ELTs will not meet the requirements for “readily accessible” removal and use, if contained within or attached for conjoined use with an emergency life raft after deployment.

Background: RTCA, Inc. Special Committee 204 (SC-204) was chartered to evaluate and revise outdated Minimum Operational Performance Standards for 406 MHz ELTs to include a new class of transmitters that incorporate new technologies. SC-204 addressed the provisions for carriage of an approved survival type ELT for extended over-water operations (§ 121.339) and concluded that such an ELT, contained within or attached for conjoined use with an emergency life raft, is not capable of meeting the requirements for easy access and deployment. Such ELTs must be capable of use outside the airframe environment so that the COSPAS-SARSAT satellites can detect its signal.

Discussion: The mission of the International COSPAS-SARSAT Program is to assist Search and Rescue activities on a worldwide basis by providing accurate, timely, and reliable alert and location data to the international community. The COSPAS-SARSAT Program Office has requested that the FAA transmit the information contained in this InFO to the airlines and other operators. Timely detection of distress ELT signals is important to the overall success of search and rescue.

Recommended Action: Directors of safety, directors of operations, chief pilots, training managers, and pilots operating airplanes under part 121 holding operational specifications for extended over-water flight authorization, as well as those operators who fly over large, unpopulated (designated) land masses are encouraged to carry at least one survival type 406 MHz ELT. This should be independent of the one required under § 121.339. Such ELTs, if carried, should be located in a position that is accessible by crewmembers and, if contained, be identified with a label that conspicuously marks the location of the ELT. In addition, if an ELT is mounted within a fixture, crewmembers should be trained and familiar with its removal, and overall use. For more information on the use of ELTs please refer to the following Web sites:

- <http://www.sarsat.noaa.gov/>
- <http://www.faa.gov/ats/aat/ifim/ELT.htm>