

Dear Alaskan Aviator and Aircraft Owner

On February 1, 2009, the satellite monitoring of 121.5 MHz ELTs ceased operation for good. The good news is that the new 406 MHz ELT has taken its place. The new 406 ELT is more powerful, more accurate and less prone to the false signals that have plagued Search and Rescue over the years.

What makes the 406 ELT a good investment? In the past, a rescue could not be initiated before several passes of the orbiting satellite, thus wasting precious hours. The 406 ELT quickly gives a more precise location and identity of the owner.



Limitations of 121.5 / 243 MHz Beacons... ...Poorer Accuracy



Search Time = 12+ hours

Ref: www.sarsat.noaa.gov

The new 406 ELT provides searchers a more precise and accurate location for a timely rescue.

How much would you pay to ensure that rescuers have the best information possible to find you and your family in the shortest amount of time?

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE WORTH?

Frequently Asked Questions

•**Can I install the new 406 ELT myself using the existing mount and antenna?** Probably not! The mounting points may have to be strengthened and the antenna replaced.

•**Am I required by current regulations to upgrade to the 406 ELT?** The regulations state that (with few exceptions) you must have an ELT mounted in your aircraft. Currently, there are no requirements to upgrade to the 406 ELT. It just makes good sense!

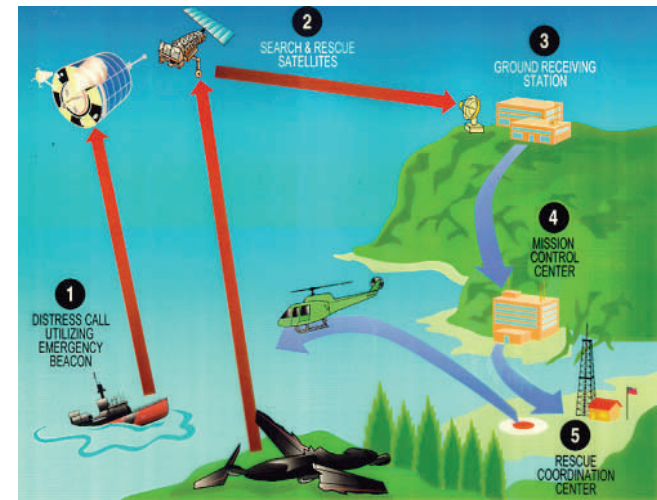
•**Are all 406 ELTs enabled with GPS reporting?** No, you'll have to check with your supplier before purchasing. Some 406 ELTs can use your existing panel mounted GPS to broadcast a more accurate location to Search and Rescue. Installation for these ELTs are generally more complex. Currently, no aircraft 406 ELTs on the market have internal GPS capabilities.

•**Do I need to upgrade to the 406 ELT to fly through Canada?** There are no official requirements at this time, but expect one to become law in the near future. (Ref: www.tc.gc.ca)

•**How many 406 ELT brands are on the market and how much should I expect to pay?** Currently, there are three or four brands on the market with prices ranging from \$800 to \$2000, plus installation.

•**Do all 406 ELTs also broadcast on both 121.5 and 243 MHz?** Yes, all the current aircraft models do, but you should verify that with your supplier before you purchase.

•**What rescue attempt can I expect if I only have the 121.5 ELT installed?** Several things have to happen: Your rescuers must first know you're missing and they must also know your intended route and destination. If you're lucky, a passing airplane just may be monitoring 121.5 and hear your distress signal. Even then, the search area could be quite large.



Old 121.5 (C91a) ELT output = 1 watt / New 406 ELT = 5 watt signal.

•**I carry a Satellite phone with me when I fly. Do I still need to upgrade to the new 406 ELT?** Satellite phones and PLBs (Personal Locator Beacon) are great tools and many pilots carry them into the Bush, but satellite phones and PLBs won't automatically broadcast a distress message after an accident.

A 406MHz ELT is your BEST insurance for a prompt rescue.

•**How long does the 406 ELT battery last?** The battery replacement schedule is between 5-6 years. You should test the 406 ELT regularly according to the manufacturer's procedure and schedule to ensure a fully functional unit.

•**How can I tell if the aircraft I'm flying in has a new 406 ELT installed?** You should ask the owner or operator. You may have to access the ELT unit itself to verify it's the new 406. As the pilot, it's important to know and make your passengers aware of the location of your ELT.

•**What are some improvements that make the 406 ELT a more reliable instrument?** Improvements include increased requirement for fire survival, greater shock resistance, requirement to be water proof even after battery replacement and longer transmitting time due to non-continuous pulse transmissions.

If you do have an accident or just an unplanned landing and **need help**—
Be Aware:

121.5 MHz ELTs are no longer monitored by satellite!

That means it may take days or weeks for an accident site to be located. Your chances of survival after a serious airplane crash greatly diminish over time. We urge all Alaskan pilots to consider equipping their aircraft with a 406 MHz ELT. They're more accurate and more reliable than the old 121.5 units and it's comforting to know that in an emergency, you can be located in a matter of hours.

Whether or not you choose to equip your aircraft with a 406 ELT, make sure to file a flight plan for every flight. Once in the air, stay on your filed route or amend your routing by radio.

Consider leaving an aeronautical chart at home (or with a friend) with your proposed route, destination and contact information marked on it.

If able, monitor 121.5 enroute. You may be able to save someone's life!

Be sure to see your CFI and get some refresher training in your aircraft before you fly this season.

Are you a member of the WINGS program?



www.faasafety.gov



Courtesy BILL ROTH/ Anchorage Daily News

Remember these important points:

You should always file a "Flight Plan" for your intended route of flight, then fly the planned route you filed (or modify it) to improve your chances of being found.

If you have an extra radio, monitor 121.5 when flying. You may save a life!

Be sure to remove the battery and properly dispose of your old 121.5 ELT when upgrading to the 406 ELT.

Remember, you must correctly register your new 406 ELT to greatly improve your odds for a fast and accurate rescue.

Want more information?

Go to: www.sarsat.noaa.gov

Your Alaskan FAA Safety Team

**Working together with you to make
Alaska aviation safer.**

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Are you equipped with the new 406 MHz ELT?



Courtesy of Alaska Air National Guard

As of February 1, 2009, the COMSAT array of satellites no longer monitors ELTs (Emergency Locator Transmitters) transmitting on the 121.5 MHz Frequency.

What does that mean to you and how can you greatly improve your chances of a speedy rescue for you and your family in the event of an aircraft emergency or accident?