

An Immersion Suit Bag Is *Not* a Laundry Bag



A crew member on a Southeastern Alaska vessel was told to check out his immersion suit before stowing it. He declined, saying he had checked it recently and everything was fine. Nothing else was said on the matter.

After fishing for part of the season, a drill was conducted. The crew member shook his immersion suit bag . . . and a pile of dirty laundry emerged! Someone had borrowed his immersion suit bag for use as a laundry bag.

There are two lessons to be learned from his experience. First, shake out those immersion suit bags and go over

the maintenance of that suit. Monthly drills are a good opportunity. Second, don't use immersion suit bags as laundry bags, or for any other purpose. You should **always** know that your suit is in the bag. A pile of dirty laundry is of little help in an emergency at sea. You will want something to don other than dirty socks, underwear and sweats!

WRONG EPIRB PART PROVES DISASTEROUS ON F/V ADRIATIC

The F/V *Adriatic* went down off the East Coast this winter with the loss of life. No EPIRB signal was received from the vessel, delaying rescue. The Coast Guard found the submerged hull, and divers found the EPIRB C still in its case. The villain was the white plastic rod that is supposed to be cut by a razor in the hydrostatic release. In this case, the plastic rod was not cut.

The maker of the EPIRB (an ACR 406 model RLB 23) was not at fault, nor was the maker of the hydrostatic release (Hammer). The problem was that in the early 1990's, the Hammer razor was redesigned and no longer could cut the hard white plastic bolt. The bolt was redesigned from a softer plastic material that could be cut by the razor. The new bolts are black in color. ACR provided these new, black plastic bolts to all ACR registered EPIRB holders.

However, the owner of the *Adriatic* did not replace the older white plastic bolt. The EPIRB was trapped in its holder. If you own one of the first generation ACR 406 EPIRBs (it looks a bit like a long hot dog), take a moment to make sure the plastic bolt sticking up through the top of the case is BLACK. If it is black, that is the proper rod. If it is white, however, the hydrostatic mechanism may not function and the EPIRB will sink with the vessel. If you need a replacement rod, ACR can be contacted at ACR Electronics, 5757 Ravenswood Rd., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33312-6645 or email at info@acrelectronics.com



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