



DoD INSTRUCTION 3002.02

406 MHZ EMERGENCY BEACONS AND OTHER EMERGENCY REPORTING DEVICES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE IN SUPPORT OF PERSONNEL RECOVERY AND SEARCH AND RESCUE

Originating Component: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

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Approved by: Colin H. Kahl, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directives (DoDDs) 5111.01 and 5111.10, and the November 30, 2006 Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, this issuance establishes policy and assigns responsibilities for 406 megahertz (MHz) beacons for search and rescue (SAR) and personnel recovery (PR) missions and in support of the National Addendum to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual and the National Search and Rescue Plan (NSP).

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY.

This issuance:

a. Applies to:

(1) OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands (CCMDs), the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the “DoD Components”).

(2) DoD Components that are part of the SAR system established by the DoD Federal SAR Coordinator, the NSP, and the National SAR Supplement to the IAMSAR Manual.

(3) DoD Components responding to a request for assistance from any Federal SAR coordinator for SAR services within any of the U.S. SAR regions or outside of established U.S. SAR regions, in accordance with the NSP.

b. Does not apply to DoD Components when operating under the authority of DoDD 3025.18.

1.2. POLICY.

The DoD:

a. Locates DoD personnel and platforms isolated from friendly control or in an emergency situation and requires DoD personnel and platforms to:

(1) Report isolating events and DoD.

(2) Be equipped with 406 MHz emergency beacons and other emergency reporting devices to support CCMD’s PR plans and theater PR capability requirements to enable the joint force to quickly and accurately recognize and confirm an isolating event or emergency situation and immediately notify the PR enterprise that an event occurred.

b. Permits joint force commanders to authorize alternate report and locate systems or capabilities in place of 406 MHz beacons during combat operations or other moderate-to-high risk operations, if alternate systems or capabilities provide command and control systems with immediate notification of an isolating event, emergency situation, or mishap.

c. Requires all 406 MHz beacons to be registered in the Joint Search and Rescue Satellite-Aided Tracking (SARSAT) Electronic Tracking System (JSETS).

d. Prohibits using DoD 406 MHz beacons for tracking unmanned aerial systems or vehicles in accordance with Federal Communications Commission regulations in Subpart 80.334 of Title 47, Code of Federal Regulations and Section 151 of Title 47, United States Code, also known as the “Communications Act of 1934,” as amended.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY (USD(P)).

The USD(P):

- a. Serves as the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense on 406 MHz emergency beacons used for SAR and recovering isolated personnel.
- b. Establishes DoD policy, strategy, and plans and oversees the implementation of the use of 406 MHz beacons.

2.2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE AND HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS.

Under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P), the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Hemispheric Affairs provides advice to and coordinates with the USD(P) on the use of 406 MHz beacons and other emergency locating devices in support of the NSP and civil SAR as appropriate.

2.3. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT.

Under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P), the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict:

- a. Oversees the implementation of DoD policy, strategy, and plans on the use of 406 MHz beacons in support of PR and civil SAR as appropriate for DoD support to civil SAR and the NSP.
- b. Designates a subordinate at the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense level as the DoD office of primary responsibility for policy, strategy, and plans on the use of 406 MHz beacons in support of PR and DoD support to civil SAR and the NSP.

2.4. DOD COMPONENT HEADS.

The DoD Component heads:

- a. Coordinate the use of 406 MHz beacons for testing, maintenance, or exercises with the DoD point of contact (POC) established in Paragraph 2.6.b.
- b. Require component command and control systems to use JSETS as the sole source of DoD 406 MHz beacon registration information. If the necessity exists for duplicative

registration databases in the area of operation, request an exception from the DoD POC established in Paragraph 2.6.b.

c. Develop 406 MHz beacon and other emergency reporting device testing, training, accounting, and reporting policies, in conjunction with the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency.

d. Limit the use of DoD 406 MHz emergency beacons to instances when DoD personnel are in an emergency situation or become isolated from friendly control. All device testing and training that will emit a signal will be limited and be coordinated in accordance with Paragraph 2.5.e.

2.5. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.4., the Secretaries of the Military Departments:

a. Equip, in accordance with CCMD requirements, platforms and personnel with 406 MHz emergency beacon and other emergency reporting devices that support CCMD PR and theater PR capability requirements. DoD 406 MHz emergency beacons that are SARSAT system compliant or type-approved will comply with U.S. national guidance.

b. Register all DoD 406 MHz emergency beacons and other emergency reporting devices in JSETS, in accordance with this issuance, DoDD 3002.01, DoD Instruction 3003.01, and other approved DoD databases.

(1) Registration of all DoD 406 MHz emergency beacons in JSETS results in a special registration in the U.S. 406 MHz Beacon Registration Database System administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and must be compliant with Parts 80.1061, 87.199, 95.2987, 95.2989, and 95.2993 of Title 47, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) Beacons registered in JSETS may be used across the full spectrum of DoD operations in PR and SAR.

c. Require commands that are issued DoD 406 MHz emergency beacons and other emergency reporting devices in an assigned, deployed, or temporary duty status within a geographic CCMD to update JSETS with arrival and departure dates in accordance with geographic CCMD theater entry requirements.

d. Require commands to properly register and train personnel to use DoD 406 MHz emergency beacons and other emergency reporting devices, including false alert prevention.

e. Prohibit activation for beacon tests, exercises, or any other non-emergency beacons unless coordinated with the DoD POC established in Paragraph 2.6.b.

f. Provide adequate annual funding for timely acquisition, operation, maintenance, and updating of JSETS, so that JSETS costs are shared equitably by the Military Departments.

g. Coordinate and approve all beacon and other emergency reporting devices operational requirements, device management, training, and architecture integration of equipment and technologies. Likewise, coordinate all functions relating to plans, programs, and requirements, to include integration, funding, and contracts to ensure proper beacon and other emergency reporting device management.

h. Report compromised, missing, or destroyed beacons and other emergency reporting devices through the appropriate chain of command to modify the JSETS database.

i. Provide a representative to the JSETS working group.

2.6. SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraphs 2.4. and 2.5., the Secretary of the Air Force:

a. Has primary Military Department responsibility for DoD 406 MHz emergency beacon use and operations along with JSETS-related activities as described in this issuance. In coordination with the CJCS, the Secretary of the Air Force oversees the implementation and operation of JSETS to improve DoD 406 MHz beacon capabilities and other emergency reporting devices.

b. Designates a POC to serve as the DoD representative to NOAA to coordinate DoD 406 MHz emergency beacon registration and testing.

c. Properly coordinates JSETS procedures and operations with the Beacon Registration Database System administered by NOAA to fulfill the requirements of the Parts 80.1061, 87.199, 95.2987, 95.2989, and 95.2993 of Title 47, Code of Federal Regulations.

d. Oversees necessary acquisitions, operations, maintenance, and updating of JSETS based on appropriate requirements that reflect input from the CCMDs regarding their anticipated needs and constraints. Tracks 406 MHz emergency beacon and JSETS-related funding provided by other Military Departments, contracting support, and required programming activity or budgetary reports.

e. Establishes a JSETS working group with representatives from each Military Service and the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency to address all problem reports, issues, change requests, engineering change proposals, development efforts, and funding efforts.

f. Passes 406 MHz emergency beacon alert notifications received from NOAA to the PR office of responsibility for the affected CCMD.

g. Designates a general officer or member of the Senior Executive Service to represent DoD at SARSAT Principals' meetings.

h. Designates a DoD representative on the SARSAT Program Steering Committee.

2.7. CJCS.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.4. and through the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency in accordance with DoDD 3002.01, the CJCS:

- a. Oversees the implementation and operation of JSETS to improve DoD 406 MHz beacon and other emergency reporting devices capabilities after coordinating with the Secretary of the Air Force.
- b. Establishes the training standard for all Military Departments regarding DoD 406 MHz emergency beacon and other emergency reporting device use, registration, and exercising, with false alert prevention included as an integral part of this course syllabus.
- c. Publishes guidance regarding the proper usage of 406 MHz emergency beacons and other reporting devices that is distributed widely throughout DoD as part of existing joint education and training oversight responsibilities.
- d. Conveys any DoD 406 MHz beacon and other emergency reporting devices policy issues to the USD(P) after coordinating with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict in accordance with Paragraph 2.3.b.

2.8. COMBATANT COMMANDERS.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.4., the Combatant Commanders establish procedural requirements and guidance within their area of responsibility to:

- a. Develop, publish, and enforce PR theater entry requirements for use of 406 MHz emergency beacons and other emergency reporting devices.
- b. Accurately associate DoD 406 MHz emergency beacon and other emergency reporting devices identification information in JSETS or other approved DoD databases with the current user, current unit, or current platform.
- c. Prevent testing, exercises, or any other non-emergency beacon activation unless coordinated with the DoD POC designated in accordance with Paragraph 2.6.b.
- d. Confirm that JSETS or other approved DoD database is used to register and research individual 406 MHz emergency beacon and other emergency reporting device information.
- e. Develop and maintain other emergency reporting device databases as required to meet mission requirements and publish procedures in PR theater entry requirements.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

| ACRONYM | MEANING |
|---------|---|
| CCMD | Combatant Command |
| CJCS | Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff |
| DoDD | DoD directive |
| IAMSAR | International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue |
| JSETS | Joint Search and Rescue Satellite-Aided Tracking Electronic Tracking System |
| MHz | megahertz |
| NOAA | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| NSP | National Search and Rescue Plan |
| POC | point of contact |
| PR | personnel recovery |
| SAR | search and rescue |
| SARSAT | search and rescue satellite-aided tracking |
| USD(P) | Under Secretary of Defense for Policy |

G.2. DEFINITIONS.

Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

| TERM | DEFINITION |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| DoD 406 MHz emergency beacon | A SARSAT-capable 406 MHz emergency locator beacon (i.e., personal locator beacon, emergency locator transmitter, emergency position indicating radio beacon) purchased for and utilized by DoD for use by DoD-covered personnel for SAR and PR applications. |
| emergency reporting device | Any device other than a SARSAT-capable 406 MHz emergency beacon capable of reporting an isolating event and locating isolated personnel or platforms. Examples include iridium-based reporting devices, DoD friendly force tracking devices, combat identification, |

| TERM | DEFINITION |
|---|---|
| | smart phone applications, radios, and other emergency beacons utilizing terrestrial or space-based architectures. |
| false alert | SARSAT distress alert received by SAR authorities when no distress situation actually exists. |
| IAMSAR manual | Contains guidelines for SAR in terms of shipping and aviation to ensure cooperation between the two areas of operation is effective and that operational cooperation can be carried out in actual rescue operations between different countries, organizations, and rescue units. The primary purpose of the manual is to assist States in meeting their own SAR needs, and the obligations they accepted under the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago, 1944), the International Convention for Maritime Search and Rescue (Hamburg, 1979), and the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (London, 1913). |
| joint force | Defined in the DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. |
| National Search and Rescue Committee | Federal committee composed of representatives from the Departments of Homeland Security, Defense, Transportation, the Interior, Commerce, and State, the Federal Communications Commission, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Established to oversee the NSP and act as a coordinating forum for national SAR matters. |
| platforms | DoD aircraft, sea going vessels, and land vehicles. |
| SAR | The performance of distress monitoring, communication, coordination and search and rescue functions, including provision of medical advice, initial medical assistance, or medical evacuation, through the use of public and private resources, including cooperating aircraft, vessels and other craft and installations. |

REFERENCES

- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
- Convention on International Civil Aviation, Chicago, 1944
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Delegations of Authority” November 30, 2006
- DoD Directive 3002.01, “Personnel Recovery in the Department of Defense,” April 16, 2009, as amended
- DoD Directive 3025.18, “Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA),” December 29, 2010, as amended
- DoD Directive 5111.01, “Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)),” June 23, 2020
- DoD Directive 5111.10, “Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict,” May 5, 2021
- DoD Instruction 3003.01, “DoD Support to Civil Search and Rescue (SAR),” September 26, 2011, as amended
- Department of Homeland Security, “National Search and Rescue Plan,” August 2, 2007
- International Convention for Maritime Search and Rescue, Hamburg, 1979
- International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, London, 1913
- National Search and Rescue Committee, “Catastrophic Incident Search and Rescue Addendum to the National Search and Rescue Supplement to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual Version 2.0,” current edition
- National Search and Rescue Committee, “United States National Search and Rescue Supplement to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual,” current edition
- Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “The DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” current edition
- Secretaries of the Departments of Defense, Interior, and Transportation; Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and Chair of the Federal Communications Commission; “National Search and Rescue Plan of the United States,” January 2007, as amended¹
- United States Code, Title 47, Section 151 (also known as the “Communications Act of 1934,” as amended)

¹ Available on the Internet at [https://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg534/manuals/Natl_SAR_Plan\(2007\).pdf](https://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg534/manuals/Natl_SAR_Plan(2007).pdf)