

## ACR EPIRB Alerts Rescuers – Yacht Lost, Crew Rescued

The indisputable benefit of carrying an ACR EPIRB while at sea, was once again highlighted with the successful rescue of Ellen and Frank Atteberry about 280nm NE of Gladstone.

Competing in the Port2Port Rally from Vanuatu to Bundaberg, the American flagged yacht Hot Ice struck Kenn Reef, an atoll on a submerged continental block.

Shortly after Ellen and Frank Atteberry radioed their emergency status over radio, the communication system died as water filled their yacht.

When the yacht hit the reef, it sounded as though a knife was slicing through the hull. Just as soon as the hull struck the coral, water began to pour in. The situation was extreme with the stricken pair all alone and in the middle of the Coral Sea.

As Hot Ice began to submerge the crew moved to the cockpit where they activated their ACR Rapid Fix 406 MHz EPIRB. This turned out to be a life saving decision.

The ACR Rapid Fix 406 EPIRB emits both a 406 MHz signal picked up worldwide by an international satellite monitoring system, while the 125 MHz signal acts as a homing beacon for search and rescue. The Rapid Fix can



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also interface with external GPS via NMEA0183 to download a GPS position prior to activation giving accuracy up to 100 meters.

The Atteberrys then launched their emergency life raft, but when this was ripped by the coral, they had no option but to sit it out and wait for help to arrive.

Fortunately, just 18.5km south of the reef Chris and Nancy Zigler were aboard their 13 m fibreglass sloop. When they updated their position during a regular radio schedule they learned of the couple in distress just a few kilometres away. At about 8:30 am they approached the reef and rescued the Atteberrys.

“This is yet another example of the success of an EPIRB on board a vessel,” said Mark Barker, Managing Director of RFD Australia.

“The yachties on Hot Ice had the good sense to carry on board a quality product in the ACR Rapid Fix 406 model and they also had the good sense to activate their EPIRB when they knew that they were in a life threatening situation.”

“People who go to sea, find themselves in distress and carry an EPIRB stand the very best chance of success. Without their ACR EPIRB aboard Hot Ice, you can only imagine what the outcome might have been.”

“Our experience is that when people find themselves in distress and activate their EPIRB/PLB, mostly there is a great outcome.”

RFD is a world leading supplier of marine safety products and inflatable watercraft marketed under a range of brand names. Some of these brands include Aquapro inflatable boats, Plastimo boating equipment, ACR electronics and Aquaglide water sport products.

Beginning in 1920, RFD is primarily involved in the supply and service of marine, fire, life support and gas control equipment.

For all information concerning supply and pricing of individual products within the broad range, please contact your regional RFD branch office.

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