



Kite surfers can increase their chance of rescue in an emergency by carrying a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB).
Photo by Daniel Hajdacki on Unsplash

Credit:

Jul 14, 2022 11:47 BST

Dutch Sea Rescue Crew Member Highlights Life Saving Personal Locator Beacon after Turning Survivor in Kite Surfing Scare

A crew member of the Dutch lifeboat service is encouraging others to carry a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) after activating his device when on the other side of an emergency alert while kite surfing off the coast in South Holland.

As a volunteer with the Koninklijke Nederlandse Redding Maatschappij K.N.R.M. (Royal Netherlands Sea Rescue Institution), the experienced surfer is well-accustomed to the dangers of the sea and the importance of locating survivors quickly in the water.

He was therefore carrying his 406MHz Ocean Signal rescueME PLB1 device with GPS and homing capabilities from distributor [Shipton Trading](#) as usual when setting off with two friends to spend time out on the water on a cold February day.

In testing conditions of Force 6 winds and heavy seas, the day took a turn for the worse when he fell over into the water, releasing the kite and losing his board. Although he was wearing a winter wetsuit, the cold conditions would soon begin to have a debilitating effect and the surfer knew immediately that activating the Ocean Signal PLB was the best option to ensure a fast rescue.

He said: “As soon as I realized my situation, I activated the PLB and waited for rescue. My two friends know I am experienced and safety conscious, so they had not initially noticed that I was in big trouble. I was in the water for around 45 minutes, and it soon began to feel very chilly.”

Upon activation, the beacon signal was received by Netherlands Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) in Den Helder, via Toulouse in France. Up-to-date registration details for the specific PLB enabled the local Coast Guard to establish the identity of the beacon owner and to access his emergency contact information.

Crucially, the advanced technology of the PLB1 immediately communicates the location of a survivor to search and rescue services via the designated 406MHz Cospas-Sarsat satellite system with position provided by a 66 channel GPS. The device also incorporates a 121.5MHz homing beacon so rescuers can pinpoint the distress signal.

“I know very well from experience when going out for a shout that it can be very difficult to find someone in the water,” he added. “A Personal Locator Beacon, or PLB, makes it much easier for rescue services. I have always carried one and selected the Ocean Signal unit as a leading PLB which is very small and easy to use. I encourage anyone who goes out on the water to invest in a PLB.”

For use on land or at sea, the [Ocean Signal rescueME PLB1](#) is the world's smallest personal locator beacon and is small and light enough to carry or attach to clothing for instant access to emergency services at the press of a button.

The survivor's PLB was supplied by Ocean Signal's Dutch distributor [Shipton Trading](#), communication and electronic safety equipment specialist, who has replaced the unit, as in all cases of successful rescues, enabling him to get back out on the water.

Carla Hogeweg, Owner and General Director, Shipton Trading, said: "We were delighted to speak to the survivor and hear that he was safe and well. With many years of experience in kite surfing and also as a rescue boat crew member himself, he is in a perfect position to understand and explain the life-saving benefits of PLBs. He knows how difficult it can be to spot someone in the water.

"We encourage anyone who is kite surfing to carry a PLB, especially if out on the water alone. A PLB will work at any time, anywhere. Relying on a mobile phone or people on the beach does not provide adequate reassurance. The GPS, satellite and homing technology of the beacons makes it certain that a call for rescue is heard immediately and that search and rescue is on the way."

Ocean Signal Ltd, global leaders in communication and safety at sea technology, is an ACR Electronics brand. Its comprehensive product range, renowned for combining advanced technology with compact design, ease of use and regulatory compliance, includes EPIRBs, Personal Locator Beacons, SARTs, AIS and Man Overboard devices, electronic flares, VHF and more.

Visit Shipton Trading's Dutch language website for Ocean Signal at www.oceansignal.nl or go to www.oceansignal.com for more information.

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About Ocean Signal

Communication and safety at sea specialist Ocean Signal™ is driven by its key commitment to saving lives. Setting the highest industry standard in technology innovation and quality of product, Ocean Signal is a worldwide leader in the design and manufacture of satellite and terrestrial emergency rescue beacons based upon VHF/UHF, AIS, DSC, GNSS and battery technologies. Its best-in-class range of survival products includes Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRB), Personal Locator Beacons (PLB), Man Overboard (MOB), Search and Rescue Transponders (SART), VHF radios, Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponders, electronic distress flares and more. Ocean Signal products provide maritime, governmental and military, aviation, as well as outdoor users the confidence that their equipment will work to, and beyond, their expectations when it is required most. For more information, go to www.oceansignal.com.

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