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406 MHz ELT's Becoming Mandatory in Canada

UHF ELT's (406 Mhz) have been around for some time now. Back in 2003, Transport Canada issued a Notice of Proposed Amendment (NPA) dealing with the issue of compliance to ICAO operating rules by Canadian operators. At that time ICAO policy was that as of January 2005, all ELTs should have the capability to operate in both 406 Mhz and 121.5 Mhz simultaneously. At the time, Transport Canada proposed the introduction of a requirement that Canadian aircraft used in international air transport services should be equipped with 406 Mhz ELTs. Transport Canada did not at that time mandate the use of 406 Mhz ELTs for domestic operations.

That is about to change.... In the very near future – Feb 1, 2009 to be precise – the COSPAS satellite monitoring of the frequency 121.5 Mhz is going to be discontinued. That will *dramatically reduce the level of safety* provided by VHF ELT's. Basically the only form of VHF ELT detection available after that date will be by other aircraft, and SAR resources.

Accordingly, Transport Canada has now tabled NPA's 2007- 031/032/033. These NPA's mandate that all Canadian-registered aircraft are to be equipped with UHF ELT's. Older VHF ELT's will not be acceptable under the new requirements. We anticipate that these NPA's will be 'fast-tracked' into formal CAR's regulations by the middle of this year, given the timeline on the discontinuance of satellite monitoring. The compliance window for equipment is anticipated to be 2 years from the date of Final Rule, subject to certain caveats.

KAAV recently announced an exciting new supplier relationship that is significant and timely. We are very pleased to be appointed as the Eastern Canada Service Center and Distributor for the **Artex** line of ELTs. Artex is the world leader in the manufacture of UHF ELT Systems. The Artex product line is extensive, and designed to fill the needs of all segments of aviation from light GA to heavy Air Transport. Pricing on their UHF ELT Systems start as low as \$995.00 – plus installation costs. These are available now, both with and without Nav Interface capability (which enables broadcast of last known Lat/Long position). At KAAV and MC2 we are taking orders and performing installations now. For obvious reasons we do encourage voluntary conformity *well before* the end of the compliance period for this mandate.

For more information or discussion on this or other issues, please contact either Barry Aylward or Bill Arsenault. You can reach them by email at barry@kitcheneraero.com and bill@midcanadamod.com or by telephone at the numbers published below.

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The Artex UHF ELT Product Line for General Aviation:



The **ME406** is designed specifically with the private pilot in mind. With a weight of only two pounds it is the lightest, smallest and least expensive 406 MHz ELT on the market. The mechanical footprint is compatible with all Artex and some other ELT product dimensions. It features a single antenna output feeding a wire whip or a rod antenna, depending on the aircraft speed. The ME406 is available with a single-axis G-switch for fixed wing applications and as a helicopter model (HM) with a multi-axis G-switch. The ME-406 Series does not include NAV Interface capability.

Also of note, one of the latest versions of the ME406 is the ME406 ACE. The "ACE" stands for Absolute Cost Efficiency. This unit incorporates a remote switch design that allows retrofitting for currently installed ACK E-01 VHF ELT installations. It requires hardly any alterations on the instrument panel. Another popular feature of this unit is the capability for re-using the wiring harness of the installed ELT thus - reducing the installation cost. Overall ME406 ACE offers of an upgrade to 406 MHz ELT technology with affordably for the aircraft owner.

The Artex **G406** Series are dual frequency units designed for use with the general aviation market in mind. Two Antennas systems are required. The ELT automatically activates during a crash and has been tested to meet the rigorous requirements of TSO C126 including 500 G shock, 1000 pound crush as well as flame and vibration tests. The G406-4 is available for use with Artex's low cost whip antennas or fibreglass rod antenna. This unit may also be interfaced with the optional Artex ELT/NAV Interface, enabling latitude/longitude data to be transmitted as part of the 406.025 MHz message.

The **C406-1** and **-2** Series have most of the same features of the G406 but also are available for use with Artex's low cost whip antennas, rod antenna, or a blade antenna. It also features a single coax output cable and is available for fixed wing with a single-axis G-Switch and helicopter (HM) applications with a multi-axis G-Switch. This series may also be interfaced with the optional Artex ELT/NAV Interface. Programming 'dongles' are also available for fleet operators.

The **C-406N** is the latest GA version, featuring VHF/UHF capability on a single antenna and cable, and an integral NAV Interface (ARINC 429 only). The C406N represents the current state-of-the-art in a General Aviation UHF ELT System, and is now available and certified for use in Canada.



These are the Artex UHF ELT options. Choose one for your aircraft and plan it in as part of your next scheduled maintenance session. February 2009 will be here sooner than you think!

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