

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

HEADQUARTERS AIR COMBAT COMMAND
LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, VIRGINIA

24 Feb 00

MEMORANDUM FOR Commission's Secretary
Magalie Roman Salas
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW, Room TW-B204
Washington, DC 20554

FROM: HQ ACC/XO
205 Dodd Blvd
Langley AFB, VA 23665-2789

SUBJECT: Notice of Proposed Rule Making (FCC 99-366)

1. Designation of the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC) as the central point of contact for Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) alerts in the 48 lower United States is not appropriate and could degrade its ability to conduct Inland Region Search and Rescue (SAR).
2. As Inland SAR Coordinator, this office has delegated execution of this responsibility to the AFRCC. The AFRCC, as the nation's lead aeronautical rescue center, initiates investigation of aviation-related emergency beacons which the Search and Rescue Satellite-Aided Tracking (SARSAT) system detects. AFRCC also serves as the focal point for all federal SAR in the lower 48 states, assisting local and state authorities as needed.
3. The issue of PLBs, by their very nature, relates to Missing Person incidents. Based on the Memorandum of Agreement we have with the Governor of each state, these incidents are the responsibility of the local sheriff or state emergency management agency. PLB alert messages, therefore, should be sent directly to the state or local agency responsible for missing person searches. The AFRCC should not receive or prosecute PLB alerts; such action would violate all 48-state agreements.
4. The AFRCC will continue to coordinate lawful federal assistance to local and state agencies when needed in missing person incidents or any other facet of SAR.

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DONALD A. LAMONTAGNE
Major General, USAF
Director of Aerospace Operations

cc:
OSD/DPMO
HQ USAF/XO