

Guidelines for pleasure craft under 13.7m in length, compiled with the RNLI and MCA, outlining the combinations of equipment including flares, EPIRB, and VHF/DSC, you could consider carrying and using to indicate that you need assistance, depending upon the type of your vessel and where you use it.

Area Equipment	Craft sailing not more than 3 nm from the coast	Craft sailing in GMDSS Sea Area A1 that are more than 3 nm from the coast	Craft sailing outside of Sea Area A1	Comments
Portable VHF	Highly Recommended where fitting a fixed VHF DSC set is impractical in small day or open boats or similar	Highly Recommended where fitting a fixed VHF DSC set is impractical	Optional (It is assumed that a vessel sailing outside of sea area A1 is fitted with communication equipment suitable for the area of operation)	A waterproof set is recommended
DSC/VHF	Highly Recommended	Highly Recommended	Highly Recommended (note that sea area A1 is the boundary for nominal VHF range although in practice sets might work well beyond that).	Highly recommended that DSC VHF is interfaced with GPS for position information and emergency aerial carried in case of dismasting
PLB/EPIRB	PLB attached to individual in small day or open boats or similar highly recommended, particularly if only a portable VHF is carried	PLB/ EPIRB Highly Recommended particularly if DSC VHF not carried	PLB/EPIRB Highly Recommended as VHF DSC may not work outside Sea Area A1	PLBs are highly recommended for small open boats, dinghies or similar. PLB/EPIRB should be fitted with GPS and 121.5MHz homer built in
SART/ AIS SART	Optional	Optional	Optional	SART is not required if EPIRB has 121.5MHz homer
Inmarsat or MF/HF Radio transceiver with DSC	Not required	Not Required	Inmarsat or Marine Radio capable of receiving/transmitting and operating in the area of operation	
Mobile phone	Last Resort	Last Resort	Last Resort	Keep dry and charged at all times <u>DO NOT RELY ON AS YOUR ONLY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION</u>
Battery operated Laser Flares	Optional	Optional	Optional	Recommended if carriage of pyrotechnics is not wanted. Devices still require trial for effectiveness by SAR Services and may in due course negate requirement for flares for location
Parachute Flares	4 recommended if portable VHF, fixed VHF DSC or PLB/EPIRB not carried	4 recommended if VHF DSC or PLB/EPIRB not carried	4 recommended if VHF DSC or PLB/EPIRB not carried	
Red Handheld Flares	3 unless a reliable alternative day/night locating method is carried	3 unless a reliable alternative day/night locating method is carried	3 unless a reliable alternative day/night locating method is carried	These are valuable for 'final mile' locating by day and by night and in poor visibility
Smoke signals buoyant or handheld	Highly Recommended for day boating where no other locating device is carried	Highly Recommended for day boating where no other locating device is carried	Optional for daylight locating. It is assumed that vessels sailing outside area A1 are equipped with a range of locating devices	Valuable for 'final mile' locating in daylight and in reasonable visibility. Contain no explosives. Must burn for a minimum of 3 minutes
Day/Night Flares and Mini Signal Personal Survival Flares	Recommended as an alternative where space might be at a premium such as for windsurfing	Optional	Optional	These are particularly useful as a personal distress flares
Luminous Dye Marker	Optional	Optional	Optional	Requires testing and then will only be useful as an alternative by day in lieu of orange smoke