



David Bowes at the helm of Destiny of Scarborough

Sep 12, 2017 14:18 BST

ACR Electronics - Southampton Boat Show: Whale-Strike Survivor Relives Dramatic Rescue (Stand J227)

- David Bowes activated his ACR Electronics EPIRB when his 15m yacht was damaged

- ACR Electronics SurvivorClub member David Bowes will be at the Southampton Boat Show on the Force 4 Chandlery Stand J227, Ocean Hall, at 2:50pm on Friday, 15th September

A British skipper whose yacht was sunk after a whale strike this year will highlight the importance of carrying an EPIRB when he relives his dramatic rescue at TheYachtMarket.com Southampton Boat Show on the Force 4 Chandlery Stand J227.

David Bowes, from Pocklington, East Yorks, and two crew members, made national headlines when they were forced to abandon 15m sailing yacht Destiny of Scarborough, after it was damaged about 300 miles north east of the Azores.

On passage from the British Virgin Islands to Southampton, David was at the chart table at 9:30am on 21 May when he was suddenly thrown sideways across the saloon. He went to the cockpit to see the large tail fluke of a whale close to the starboard quarter.

The sailors could find no initial damage, but a few hours later they noticed water coming in through cracks in the hull. With the wind forecast to increase and the prospect of a four-day journey to the Azores, David decided to activate his [ACR Electronics GlobalFIX V4 EPIRB](#) and their position was relayed to the bulk carrier 'MV Justice' about 100 miles away.

David had recently bought the EPIRB from Force 4 Chandlery as he wanted an emergency communication device for ocean sailing before departing from Southern Turkey out of the Mediterranean to begin the Atlantic circuit in Jan 2017.

David said: "You never expect to encounter what we did. I had the engine on to charge the batteries and the sea was relatively calm and the winds were light when the whale hit us. I've no idea what sort of whale it was but this huge tail fluke was as big as the RIB we kept on the back of the yacht which is just over ten feet long.

"The following day, it became apparent that the boat was taking in water and, whilst the pumps were coping, the structural integrity was causing me concern. If we had been 60 miles from dry land I would have tried to nurse it ashore but we were about 350 miles from the Azores and further from the Portuguese mainland. I wasn't going to gamble with three people's lives including my own and our opinion was we wouldn't have lasted that long.

“It was a difficult decision to activate the EPIRB, but we’re fully aware now we’re back on dry land of how close we came to losing our lives. We were grateful to be rescued by MV Justice but sadly had to let Destiny sink the bottom.”

The Portuguese rescue services mobilised two Air Force jets, after being alerted by Falmouth coastguards, which circled the yacht overhead. Liberian-flagged merchant vessel Justice, which was crewed and captained by Ukrainian sailors, then picked them up and took them to the northern Spanish port of Aviles.

Cruz Martins, Captain of Ponta Delgada Port in the Azores where the rescue operation was coordinated from, added: “Their lives were in danger. The next step would have been jumping into the life raft, and losing communications with us, making the rescue operation even more difficult. The navy corvette that was mobilised would only have arrived the morning after. In the end, we can say they were very lucky for having a merchant vessel nearby. Hitting a whale is not a unique occurrence, but it is rare.”

David Bowes is one of over 200 members of SurvivorClub, ACR’s ground-breaking beacon user replacement program, which features first-hand tales of survival from people across the world who have used an ACR PLB, EPIRB or ELT to alert the rescue services.

The GlobalFIX V4 EPIRB offers the latest in marine electronic lifesaving technology and features high-efficiency electronics for reliable performance. It has a 10-year user replaceable battery pack, reducing ownership cost, and can be manually activated easily to accurately fix the exact location and transmit the coordinates to search and rescue.

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For further information, please contact:

ACR Media Relations

Mikele D’Arcangelo or Nichole Kalil

Tel: +1 954-862-2115/2180

E-mail: nichole.kalil@acrartex.com

www.acrartex.com

or

Saltwater Stone

Jules Riegal

Tel: +44 (0)1202 669244

E-mail: j.riegal@saltwater-stone.com

www.saltwater-stone.com

About ACR Electronics, Inc.

ACR Electronics, Inc. a Drew Marine Company designs and manufactures a complete line of safety and survival products. Available products include Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs), Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs), ARTEX Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELTs), Search and Rescue Transponders (SARTs), Strobe Lights, Life Jacket Lights, Boat Search Lights, and other associated safety accessories. ACR's facility Quality Management System (QMS) is certified by TUV USA and is certified in accordance with AS9100C / ISO 9001:2008 standards. Additionally ACR maintains FAA Part 145 Repair Station Certification status. Recognized as a world leader in safety and survival technologies for over 60 years, ACR has provided life-saving equipment to the marine, outdoor, aviation industries as well as to various government agencies worldwide.