Oskarshamn Marina managers Anna and Rasmus Antonsson whose ACR Electronics EPIRB activated when their Elan 43 hit rocks

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ACR Electronics: Swedish Sailors Highlight the Importance of EPIRBs after Dramatic Rescue off Menorca

ACR Electronics EPIRB was automatically activated after Oskarshamn Marina managers Rasmus and Anna Antonsson hit rocks in their Elan 43

Featured as a new tale of survival in ACR Electronics initiative SurvivorClub, a Swedish couple who were forced to board their life raft after their Elan 43 hit rocks off Menorca are highlighting the importance of carrying and using an EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon).

Rasmus and Anna Antonsson, who run the Oskarshamn Marina in Sweden, were heading for Ciutadella from Mahon in November last year when they lost both their headsail and engine power and started to drift towards the cliffs.

They managed to board their life raft just before their yacht grounded and was dismasted. The ACR Electronics GlobalFix PRO EPIRB they were carrying in the vessel activated as it came into contact with water.

Mr Antonsson said it was hugely reassuring that their position was known by the search and rescue services, but said the experience taught them a number of lessons about boating safety.

“After we reflected on the incident, we can say that we were very pleased with the ACR EPIRB and extremely grateful to the very professional and skilled search and rescue crew from Ciutadella,” he said.

“We have never sailed without an EPIRB before and it felt really good that the ACR beacon was transmitting our position at all times. However, the EPIRB was one of the items left in the cockpit, so next time we will have one in the grab bag and one in the galley.”

Mr and Mrs Antonsson bought the boat, Polly, in summer last year in Croatia and planned to sail her to Sweden for an upgrade ready for them to live aboard in preparation for a world cruise. A former Army sergeant, Mr Antonsson has previously worked as a skipper in both charters and deliveries.

On the day of the incident, the wind was about 22 knots with high seas when they rounded the lighthouse at the south east corner of the island.

“We had decided to set the fore sails with the engine running at low rpm to reduce the rolling of the boat when suddenly the sails blew out from the furlex at the bottom and all the way up to the genoa halyard. We eventually managed to secure the sail, but almost instantly after we were back on course the engine completed died.

“We drifted quickly towards the cliffs. We sent out a mayday on the VHF but reception was very bad so we tried the mobile phone and they told us it would take 40 minutes for them to get there with no other ships nearby. The

raft was stored aft so it was easy to just pull it into the water. We got in and drifted out about 40m from the cliff. After about two minutes in the raft, we heard the first big smash when the mast broke and crashed down into the cockpit.

“We learned a number of things. Firstly, the raft must be easily accessible in the aft so that one person can slide it into the water. It would have been impossible for us to launch the raft if it had been on the deck behind the mast. Secondly, it is important to have a pre-packed grab bag with everything in it. We had the EPIRB, handheld VHF, backpack and other useful items in the cockpit, but the only thing we took with us in the rush was a bag with passports and credit cards.”

The experience has not deterred the couple who are now looking for a new boat as well as preparing for the summer season at Oskarshamn Marina.

The ACR Electronics GlobalFix PRO EPIRB is small and rugged and will automatically turn on and acquire your position upon activation. Its robust internal 66-channel GPS provides faster acquisition from a cold start, accurately fixing the exact location of the vessel in distress. The coordinates are then transmitted via a 406MHz distress signal to search and rescue authorities.

A growing list of survivors who activated ACR Electronics beacons in a life-threatening emergency have joined the ACR SurvivorClub to receive a free replacement beacon and share their stories and help raise awareness about the best practices to ensure safety, both on land and at sea. For more information on ACR Electronics’ beacons and other safety equipment, go to https://www.acrartex.com/.

Ends

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- For sharing this content on social media please tag our accounts as well as the SAR agency associated with the story. Use #savedbythebeacon or #ACRelectronics in your post as well, so we may report your story.
- If you require images such as: survivor images, logos or product

images, please reply to this e-mail with your request.

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About ACR Electronics, Inc.

ACR designs and manufactures a complete line of safety and survival products under the ARTEX and ACR brand names including ELTs, EPIRBs, PLBs, AIS, SART, Strobe Lights, Life Jacket Lights, Search Lights and safety accessories. The quality management systems of this facility have been certified by TUV USA to AS9100C / ISO 9001:2008. Recognized as the world leader in safety and survival technologies, ACR and ARTEX have provided safety equipment to the aviation and marine industries as well as to the

military since 1956. The company is headquartered in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and employs over 180 at its manufacturing facility.