



Ocean rowers Joseph Gagnon (left) and Brian Conville were rescued after their boat capsized near the end of a North Atlantic crossing attempt

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Ocean Signal: Rowers Rescued after Ocean Signal EPIRB Alerts Irish Coast Guard

Two ocean rowers have been rescued by the Irish Coast Guard from their overturned boat off the coast of Mizen Head, County Cork, after the activation of their Ocean Signal rescueME EPIRB1.

Brian Conville, 25, from Dublin and Joseph Gagnon, 20, from Quebec, Canada, were just hours away from completing a record-breaking North Atlantic

crossing when their boat capsized in rough seas about 165 miles from Ireland on July 21.

The alarm was raised when their Ocean Signal EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) sent out an automatic alert when the device became submerged after the boat turned over. The Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Centre in Valentia dispatched the Waterford-based Sikorsky Rescue 117 helicopter, with Irish Air Corps Casa 253 providing top cover. The two crew were winched from the sea and transported to Tralee Hospital in Co Kerry where they were treated for hypothermia.

After leaving St John's, Newfoundland, Canada on June 13, the rowers had looked set to become the first duo to cross the Atlantic, west to east, from Canada in under 40 days and the youngest pair to complete the voyage, before they ran into difficulty. They had originally aimed to land in France but were forced to shorten their trip due to challenging weather and injuries and decided to head for Co Cork instead.

Brian told CBC news that the EPIRB saved their lives. He said: "Without the EPIRB, we wouldn't be here today. We'd still be on the boat. We realised that we were incredibly lucky, because when the boat turned over, I must have knocked our EPIRB [emergency position-indicating radio beacon], which is the beacon that you would generally press if you're in distress. It was quite violent when the boat turned over. I was thrown from side to side. I was tied on enough; that's the only reason I stayed with the boat. But the EPIRB disappeared, so it activated itself when it went into the water, and that's what saved our lives, to be honest."

Despite the ordeal, Joseph is still planning to cross the 5,000 kilometres separating Canada and France in 2018 and become the youngest single ocean rower.

He said: "The EPIRB was part of the equipment provided with the boat and a very important part of our safety kit. It was our only chance of rescue and we were very happy to see the helicopter."

An EPIRB provides the boat's essential link to the emergency services. The Ocean Signal rescueME EPIRB1 is the most compact on the market and was therefore ideal for the small rowing vessel. Automatically activating once the unit has been immersed in water, the Ocean Signal EPIRB communicates the

location via the 406MHz Cospas-Sarsat satellite system with position provided by an integrated 66-channel GPS receiver and 121.5MHz homing beacon.

Speaking about the rescue, Coast Guard's SAR Manager Gerard O'Flynn said: "It highlights that if you can raise the alarm and stay afloat then you stand a very good chance of being rescued. I also want to compliment the Helicopter crew and Valentia on a very successful operation and thank the Air Corps for their support."

Visit Joseph's website at <http://www.josephalarame.com/l-equipage> for more details.

For more information about Ocean Signal's range of safety and communication products, visit www.oceansignal.com.

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About Ocean Signal

Communication and safety at sea specialist Ocean Signal™ is dedicated to providing the technology and quality of product that will set industry standards.

Ocean Signal's product portfolio consists of the rescueME range of products, including the rescueME PLB1, the rescueME MOB1, the rescueME EPIRB1 and the rescueME EDF1 electronic distress flare, plus the AIS Alarm Box, and the SafeSea range of GMDSS products, including the E100 and E100G EPIRB, S100 SART and V100 handheld VHF radio, as well as the M100 and M100X professional MSLD and E101V float-free EPIRB with integrated voyage data record memory capsule. They provide both recreational and commercial mariners with simple to use, compact and affordable life-saving solutions. All products are engineered by a highly experienced team of marine electronics professionals.

Ocean Signal products are trusted by high-profile sailors, rowers, surfers and powerboat racing teams. Providing some of the world's best competitors and adventurers with vital safety and communication devices, the company's rescueME MOB1 has been selected to enhance safety standards for crew taking part in the Clipper 2017-18 Round the World Yacht Race. Ocean Signal has also sponsored the crew of Simply Fun with rescueME MOB1s, rescueME PLBs and a rescueME EPIRB1 in the 2016 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, the 16-man crew of Triton with rescueME MOB1s in the 2015 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, record-breaking sailor Andrea Mura in the single-handed OSTAR race, Mini Transat 2015 solo sailor Lizzy Foreman, Atlantic rowing duo Ocean Valour, Venture Cup offshore powerboat race team Cinzano, kite racer Gina Hewson and canoeist Adam Weymouth.

Safety and communication products from Ocean Signal offer exceptional value, meeting or exceeding international technical and safety standards. Careful design and innovation provides commercial shipping, fishing and recreational users the confidence that their Ocean Signal equipment will

work to, and beyond, their expectations when it is needed most.