

What is an equivalent eVDSD?

When inspecting boating safety equipment, maritime officers and vessel safety check personnel may encounter a new electronic Visual Distress Signal Device (eVDSD) that meets the carriage requirements for nighttime distress signals.

A Coast Guard [CG-ENG Policy Letter 03-18](#) details that eVDSDs that meet the requirements of the Radio Technical Commission for Maritime Services (RTCM) Standard 13200.0 (i.e., the yellow S-O-S light pictured here) are now considered as acceptable nighttime visual distress signals under 33 CFR 175.130. The labeling on the RTCM Standard 13200.0 light will differ (i.e., "Complies with RTCM Standard 13200.0 for an eVDSD"), but the light is nonetheless acceptable. The standards for daytime signaling device(s) (e.g., handheld flares and/or the orange distress flag) have not changed.



The lights meeting RTCM Standard 13200.0 have a new distress signal characteristic in the form of dual color **cyan** and **red-orange** S-O-S light sequence. The Coast Guard has deemed these eVDSDs as equivalent to the lights meeting 46 CFR 161.013.

Officers and vessel examiners should inspect the eVDSD for good and serviceable condition and look for the RTCM Standard 13200.0 or USCG language on the product.

The "Equipment List"

Another resource is the "[Equipment List](#)" published by the USCG. The equipment list database contains searchable listings of equipment and materials approved or certified by the US Coast Guard for use on recreational boats and commercial vessels. The listing for this new eVDSD would look similar to [RTCM 13200.0 eVDSD 161.013/9/0](#).

More information about eVDSD can be found here: [Visual Distress Signal](#)

Have questions? Contact RBSInfo@uscg.mil

US Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety

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