

# SABLE

Iridium Satellite Beacon with GPS location

## User Manual

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# 1 General Description

The Sable Subsurface Iridium Satellite Mooring Location Beacon continuously monitors for unplanned or accidental release of subsurface instrument moorings. Sable makes use of the bi-directional, global, real time Iridium satellite Short Burst Data (SBD) network in combination with GPS position location. Sable's sleek tubular design allows it to be easily retrofitted into subsurface flotation such as syntactic foam.

Inside Sable is an aluminum chassis, 9601-D-I Iridium satellite Short Burst Data core radio transceiver, a specialized low power Xeos digital controller with GPS, Iridium antenna, GPS antenna and an alkaline battery package.

Sable is intended for subsurface deployments. Xeos Technologies Inc. (Xeos) manufactures other specific products for surface applications. See [www.xeostech.com](http://www.xeostech.com) for details or call (902) 444-7650.

# 2 Theory of Operation

The Sable is intended for instantly and accurately locating and recovering high value, free drifting assets at sea. After being activated, the Sable is submerged (to a maximum depth of 5000 meters), where it enters an 'Underwater Mode'. Here, it monitors water conductivity between the top disk and the bulkhead for up to 2 years. Shortly after reaching the surface, the Sable can then report its GPS location for a further year.

Once it reaches the surface, the Sable will enter an 'Alarm Mode' and send 3 consecutive messages to the iridium satellite. The first message is an iridium check. The second message is a Status Message which contains the GPS and Iridium timing settings. The third message contains the GPS position. The Sable will transmit a position message every 10 minutes for 1 hour. After the 1 hour 'Alarm Mode', the Sable will enter a 'Surface Mode' or 'Normal Mode', where it will transmit its position based on the timing settings.

Operators can communicate with the surfaced Sable via Iridium using email commands. Status information can be obtained, including the health of the GPS system and battery voltage. Timings are settable and should be changed within the first hour of power-up or surfacing. The default timings are 3 hours, thus the user will have to wait 3 hours for the Sable to receive any command messages once it has entered 'Normal Mode'.

The surfaced Sable will continue to send position messages based on the timings, until it is manually turned off, the battery pack drops below the minimum voltage requirement of 7v, or the Sable is re-submerged.

## **3 Operating Instructions**

### ***3.1 Setting up your Iridium Account***

Sable makes use of the Iridium satellite system's ([www.iridium.com](http://www.iridium.com)) Short Burst Data (SBD) service for the 9602 transceiver. This service is a global, two-way, real-time, email-based data delivery service that has a maximum outbound (from beacon) message size of 340 bytes and a maximum inbound (to beacon) message size of 270 bytes.

Sable end users must set up an approved data delivery account with their preferred service provider. This is can be done by providing Xeos Technologies with the Equipment Identity (IMEI) number, along with up to five (5) unique e-mail addresses. Please contact Darren Penney at [darren@xeostech.com](mailto:darren@xeostech.com) with any questions regarding modem activation.

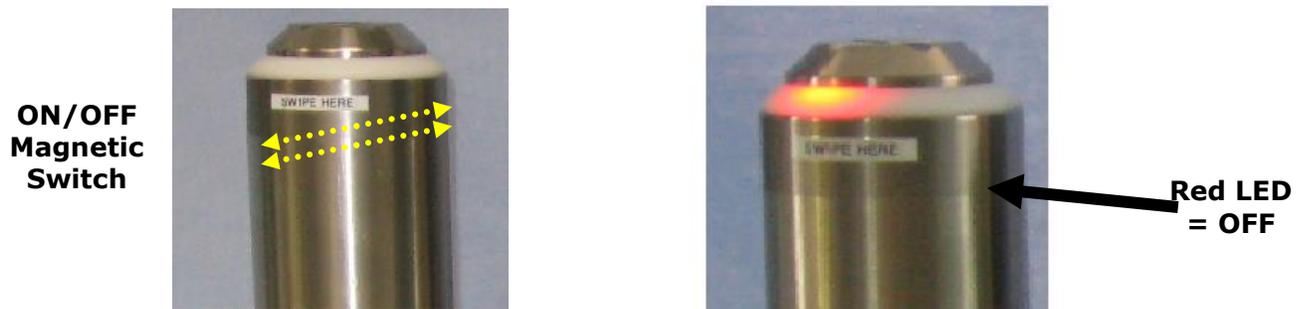
Sable makes use of a simple and robust, text-based email protocol. Any email application can be used to send and receive messages to the Sable. Web-based email providers such as Gmail offer a free service and plenty of memory storage to act as a backup in case your primary address is not accessible. Web-based services are also not subject to commercial or government mail server firewalls that may, at times, prevent email attachments from arriving.

### 3.2 On/Off Modes and Testing

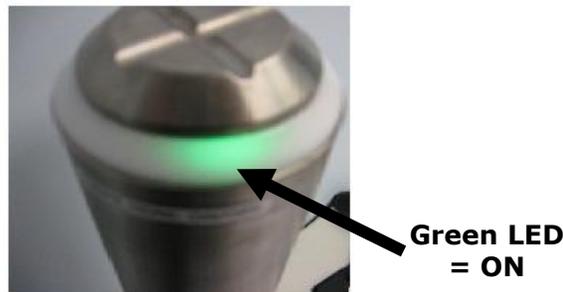
The Sable beacon is turned ON and OFF through the use of an external magnet near an internal magnetic reed switch, and operation can be identified by viewing an LED optical pipe.

To turn Sable ON, swipe the magnet back-and-forth quickly across the exterior label "ON/OFF SWIPE HERE". Watch the LED port near the top of the Sable. You will notice that at first the LED port appears red. This is an indication of its current OFF status. Once turned ON, the LED port turns green.

**Note:** It is important that the beacon has a good view of the sky during any test, so it is necessary to test the beacon outside of a building.



A flashing green LED indicates the device is in the process of powering up, continue to swipe the magnet until you see a solid green LED. A solid green LED indicates that the device is powered and operational.



To turn the Sable OFF, repeat the above procedure with the magnet on the "SWIPE" label *once* to see which mode the beacon is currently in. A red flashing LED indicates the device is powering down, continue to swipe the magnet until you see a solid red LED. A solid red LED indicates that the device is turned OFF.

At any time the magnet can be wiped across the "SWIPE" label *once* to see which mode the beacon is currently in. A red LED indicates the device is turned OFF. A green LED indicates the device is turned ON.

**Note:** It is important to let all LEDs stop illuminating before initiating another action.

**Note:** Cycling power for any reason, for example by using the switch to turn OFF/ON or by removing battery power, will cause the beacon to lose its existing configuration and return to the default configuration. It will also start the above-water Alarm Mode.

### 3.3 Communicating with the Sable

Special email commands are used to communicate with the Sable when it is above water. These commands are sent as email *attachments*. Commands can configure the Sable before deployment and can also be used to remotely reconfigure or update status with Sable. There are four attachment files that serve separate functions. All commands are given “over the air” and the Sable must have a good view of the sky to receive these commands.

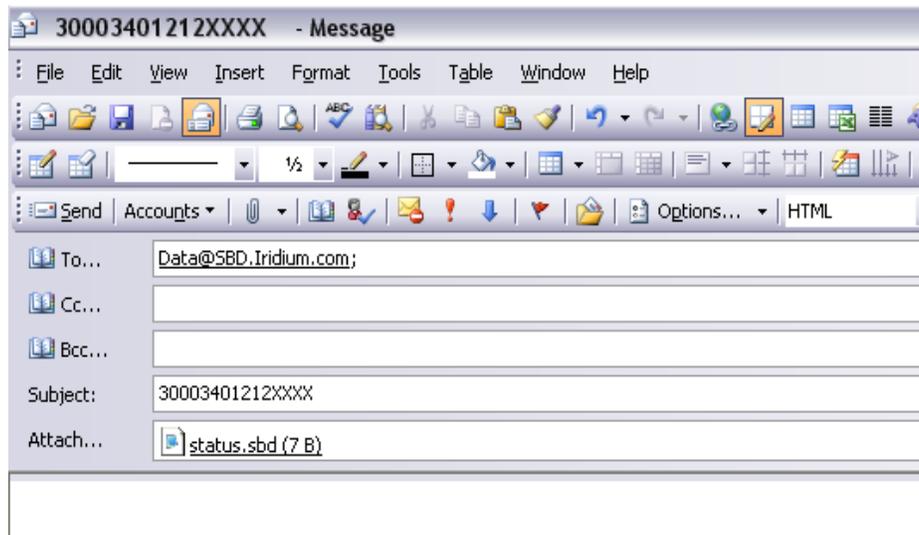
#### 3.3.1 Attaching Email Command Files

All command messages must be sent to the following email address:

**Data@sbd.iridium.com**

- All messages must have **only** the unique IMEI number of the Sable in the Subject line.
- All command files must be sent to Sable as an *attachment* to a regular email message.
- Text in the body of the message will be ignored.

Your message is sent to the Iridium Gateway in Arizona, USA:



A confirmation is immediately returned from the Gateway to let you know that your message has been received and is in the queue. This message is received from the address:

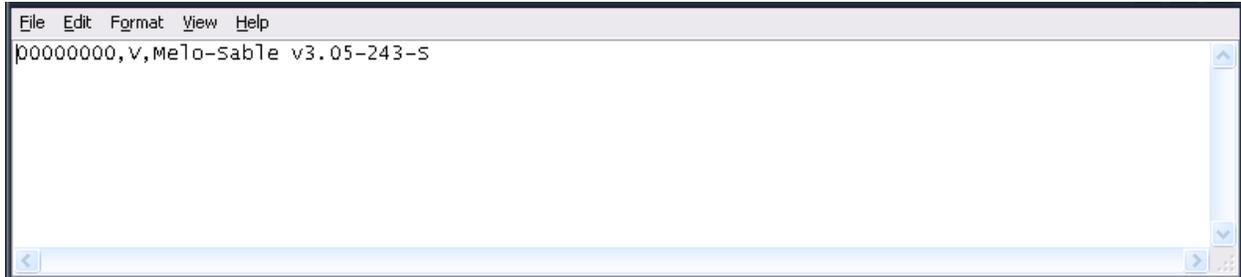
**sbdservice@sbd.iridium.com**

If your Sable is above water and working, it will receive your command message the next time it does an Iridium Message Check (dependant on timings).

**Note: It is important to keep in mind that the “sent to” and “received from” addresses are not the same.**

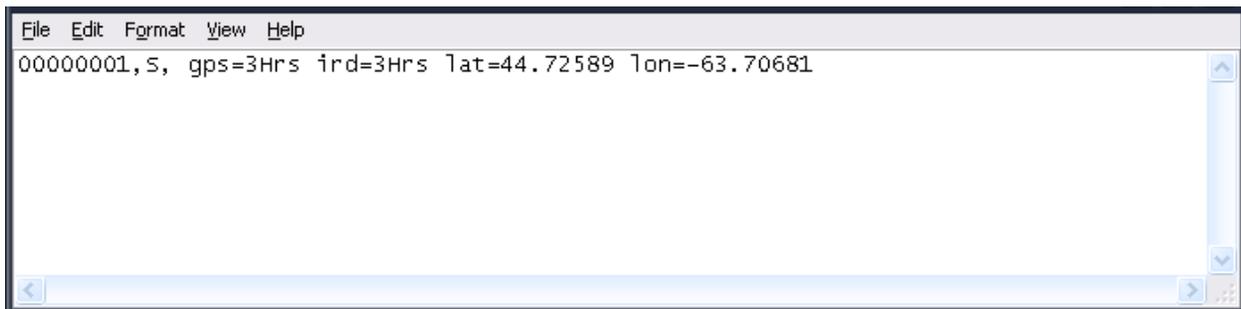
### 3.3.2 RECEIVED MESSAGES

Messages received from Sable such as GPS messages or responses to Status requests arrive as email *attachments* to all of the email accounts that the Sable was setup with. When the unit is first turned on it will send out three messages (pictured below) and will enter startup mode.



```
File Edit Format View Help
00000000,v,Me1o-Sab1e v3.05-243-S
```

The first you will receive simply indicates the Firmware Version. The letter 'V' in the message indicates that this is a version message.



```
File Edit Format View Help
00000001,s, gps=3Hrs ird=3Hrs lat=44.72589 lon=-63.70681
```

The second message is a status message. The letter 'S' in the message indicates that this is a status message. This message shows the current timing settings configured to the device. The GPS timing interval indicates the interval of GPS checks. The IRD timing interval indicates the interval at which the Sable communicates with the Iridium satellite. The Sable will check for command messages as well as send a position message every time it communicates with the Iridium satellite. This message also contains the latest GPS reading obtained by the Sable.



```
File Edit Format View Help
08261429,P, 44.72573 -63.70704 43 1422
(time,P,lat lon snrMx BV)
```

The third message is a position message. The letter 'P' in the message indicates that this is a position message. Time and date are displayed in UTC (08261429 would be Aug 26<sup>th</sup> at 2:29pm UTC). The most recent GPS position obtained by the Sable is also displayed in the position message as well as the highest GPS signal level during the most recent GPS fix (snrMx). The battery voltage is displayed in hundredths of a volt (ie. If BV = 1445, that means 14.45V on the battery).

**Note:** It is recommended that Sable users consider using a back-up email service (such as Gmail) as well as their primary provider.

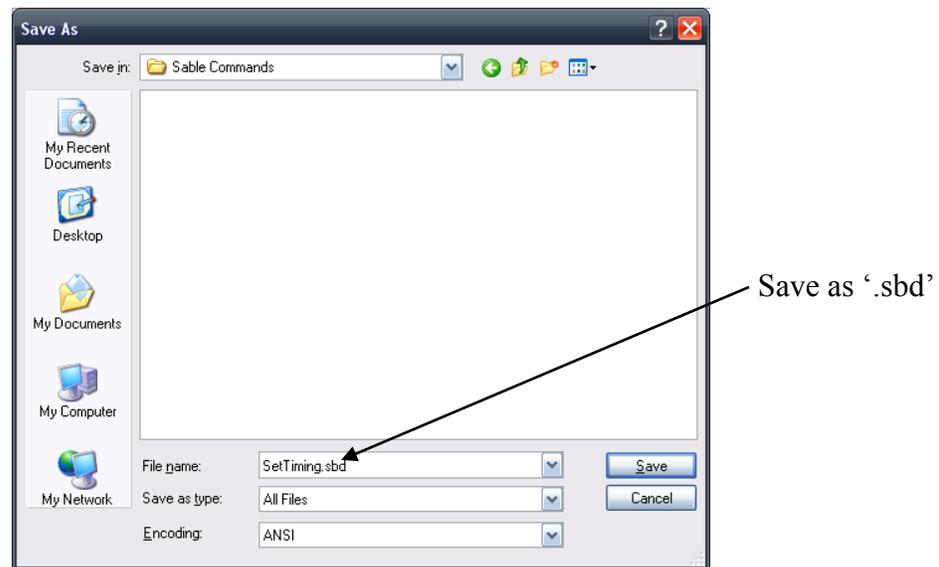
Each Sable IMEI account can be set up by an Iridium SBD service provider usually with up to five (5) email addresses. Web-based email providers such as Gmail offer a free service and plenty of memory storage to act as a backup in case your primary address is not accessible. Web-based services are also not subject to commercial or government mail server firewalls that may, at times, prevent email attachments from arriving.

### 3.3.3 COMMANDS

There are four commands that are sent to the Sable over the Iridium network *when the Sable is above water*:

1. **SETTING**
2. **STATUS**
3. **POSITION**
4. **RESET**

The commands are always sent as an email attachment. Command attachment files can easily be created using Notepad. Simply open a new Notepad and type in the command exactly how it is displayed in this manual. Save the Notepad with a name that corresponds to the command. Save the file's extension name as '.sbd'. It is recommended that all command files are saved in one location for ease of access.



### 3.3.3.1 SETTIMING

The set timing command (\$SetTiming) is used to set 4 timer parameters in Sable, the GPS check and the Iridium check in normal mode and the GPS and Iridium Check in Alarm mode. The timing values are stored in minutes. The set timing file should be set up like the file below. The default timing settings are 180 minutes (3 hours) normal, and 15 minutes alarm mode.



**180 = Normal GPS Check** interval is the number of minutes between Sable's GPS location acquisition after the first hour of power up and before it goes underwater

**180 = Normal IRD Check** interval is the number of minutes between Sable's message checks, and GPS transmissions after the first hour of power up and before it goes underwater. The Sable will wake up and check for messages (new instructions) at the Iridium Gateway based on this setting.

**15 = Alarm GPS Check** interval is the number of minutes between Sable's GPS location acquisition after the first hour of a surface event

**15 = Alarm IRD Check** interval is the number of minutes between Sable's message checks, and GPS transmissions after the first hour of a surface event. The Sable will wake up and check for messages (new instructions) at the Iridium Gateway based on this setting.

These values are the *default* settings. When power is cycled on the beacon, the unit will return to these settings. Users can change these settings by opening the "set timing.sbd" file, changing the individual numbers (within the limits), then emailing the altered file to the Sable as an attachment.

Timer Limits:

GPS	15 to 360 minutes (6 hrs)
IRD	15 to 43200 minutes (30 days)

Values set outside these limits will be ignored.

The Setup command can be sent to the Iridium gateway at any time and will take effect as soon as the Sable wakes up and connects with the Iridium Gateway.

Once the Sable receives a SetTiming command, it will change the timing configuration and send back a status message, indicating the new timing configurations.

```
File Edit Format View Help
08261532,S, gps=15Mns ird=15Mns lat=44.72573 lon=-63.70721
```

## STATUS

The status command (\$scm) is used to retrieve Sable's current settings and beacon status. There is no need to configure this message. The Status command message file should look like the one below.

```
Status.sbd - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
$scm
```

The 'answer' to a status request is a returned email attachment similar to this:

```
File Edit Format View Help
08271305,S, gps=3Hrs ird=3Hrs lat=44.72571 lon=-63.70707
```

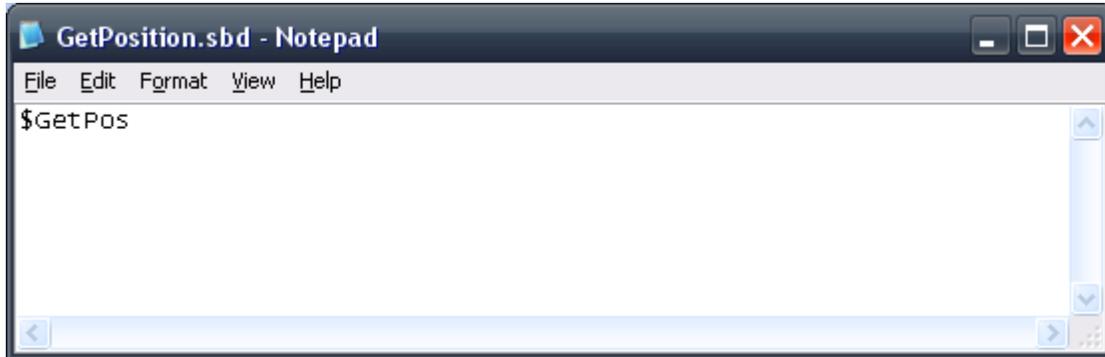
The example above contains the following information:

- **08271305** This is the date and time (UTC) in MMDDhhmm (M=Month, D=Day, h= hour, m=min). This will be the date and time of the most recent GPS fix.
- **S** This means the message is a 'Status Message'
- **gps=3Hrs** Checks the GPS position every 3 hours (this is the default).
- **ird=3Hrs** Checks the Iridium Gateway every 3 hours (default). This is when the unit receives commands and sends messages.
- **lat=44.72571** Indicates GPS latitude position of unit, according to most recent GPS fix, and is expressed in decimal degrees.
- **lon=-63.70707** Indicates GPS longitude position of unit, according to most recent GPS fix, and is expressed in decimal degrees.

There are four cases in which the user will receive a status message. Upon initial power-up of the device, the user will receive a status message. At the end of "start-up mode" the user will receive another status message. If timings are changed, the user will receive a status message. If the manual command for a status message is received from the user.

### 3.3.3.2 POSITION

The position command (\$GetPos) file is a request for an immediate GPS location, which is answered by the Sable on its next Mail Message Check. The position command message should look like the one below.

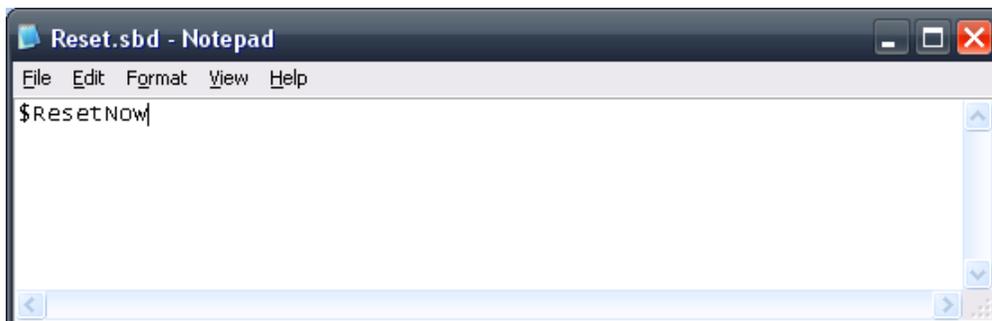


Once the Sable has received a get position command, it will return a position message, like the one below.



### 3.3.3.3 RESET

The reset command (\$ResetNow) does a full software reset of the Sable. This effectively will power OFF and ON the beacon. The unit will return to its default values of 3h,3h. It will also start the above-water Alarm Mode. **This command should only be used on the advice of Xeos Technologies Inc.** The reset command file should like the one below.



**NOTE: You must terminate each Command with a Carriage Return OR Line Feed, or both. This is done by simply hitting the enter key at the end of the message.**

### ***3.4 Power Supply and Consumption***

The Sable has an internal battery pack consisting of two independent strings of nine alkaline C cells for a total of 18 cells. The nominal voltage of each string is 13.5v. The internal battery pack is not re-chargeable and should be replaced whenever the Sable is recovered.

The Sable incorporates a power supply that uses steering diodes. It will draw power from the stronger of the 2 independent strings until they both fall below 7 volts. The battery voltage can be monitored with the Status command.

Typical sleep current for the Sable is  $<200\mu\text{A}$ . This is the amount of current the device will draw between GPS checks and Iridium transmissions. The device has a life time of 2 years while submerged.

### 3.5 Opening the Housing

Set into the bottom of the Sable's titanium case is a titanium screw-plug with two O-rings (Parker #N1470 2-013 and Parker #N1470 2-017). After removing the plug, you can see the hex-socket-cap head of a stainless #8-32 screw which holds the chassis into the case. Remove that screw and replace it with a #8-32 screw that is 2 inches long so that it protrudes out of the titanium enclosure.



It is recommended that users make use of a vice or another stabilizing device and gently tap on the protruding screw with a rubber mallet until there is enough of the head of the sable exposed to get a firm grip on with your hands and pull the internal chassis out horizontally. Be careful not to scratch the inside of the titanium case where the O-ring seats.

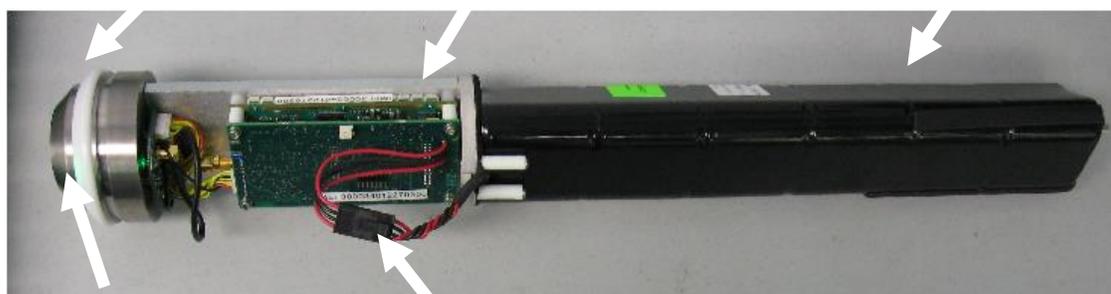
**Note: When originally packaged at the factory, the chassis is stabilized in place through the use of foam strips placed vertically along the battery pack that grip the inside wall of the housing. It may require some force to pull the chassis out of its housing.**

**Note: It is very important to be aware of where the O-ring is sitting on the titanium screw plug. If the O-rings are not sitting perfectly in their O-ring grooves, there will not be a perfect seal and could cause fatal damage to the unit.**

GPS Antenna

Electronics

Battery Pack

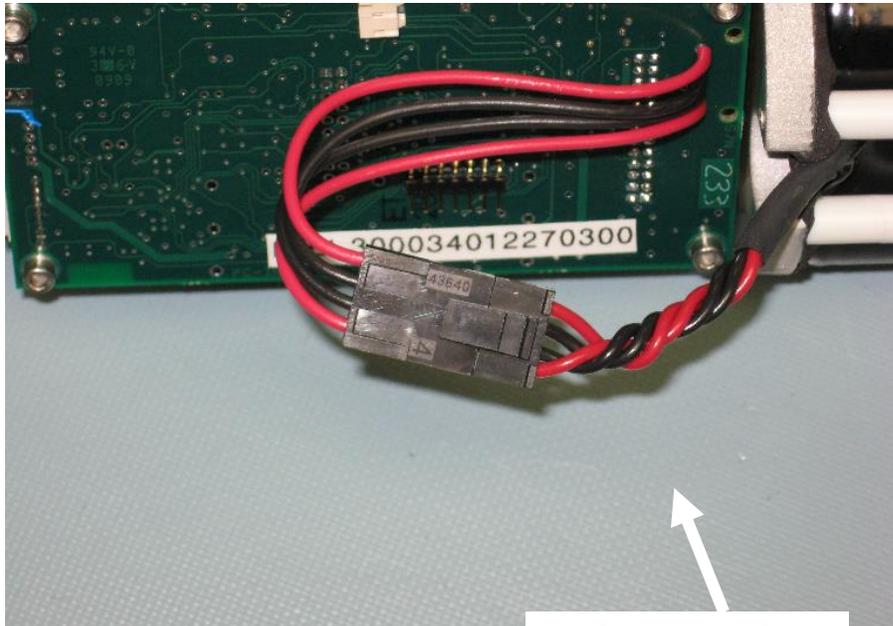


Iridium Antenna

Battery Pack  
Power Connector

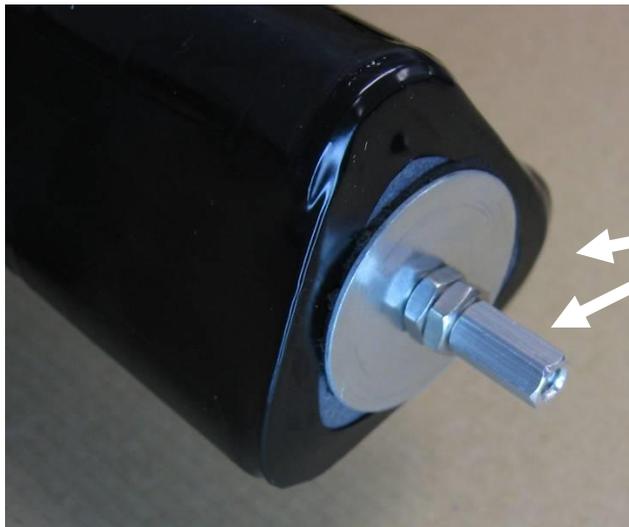
### 3.6 Replacement of Battery Pack

Disconnect the battery connector.



**Disconnect the battery connector**

Remove the nuts and plate washer from the battery pack, and carefully slide the battery pack off the center retaining rod.



**Remove nuts and washer**

This is a good opportunity to replace the O-rings. O-rings should be replaced on an annual basis, (or at the same time as battery replacement). The Sable's head has an O-ring (Parker #N1490 2-143), and a back-up ring (Parker #N0300 8-143). Remove the old rings, clean away the old ring lube, and apply a light layer of fresh O-ring lube (Parker Super 'O').

A very thin amount of O-ring lube should be applied to the O-ring before installation. Carefully slide the new O-ring up over the electronics and into its groove in the upper

titanium plate. Next, carefully slide the back-up seal (cupped side toward the O-ring, flat side toward the electronics) into place next to the O-ring.

Install the new alkaline battery pack (see specifications for battery info or contact Xeos directly). Re-install the plate washer and nuts. *Watch the LED indicator (on top of the cap) while you re-connect the battery connector.* When it shows green, you will need to use the magnet to turn OFF the Sable until it's ready for use.

Clean away the old O-ring lube inside the top of the titanium case and apply a light layer of fresh lube. Carefully slide the Sable battery pack and chassis into the case, but don't close it up yet.

Re-apply a light layer of O-ring lube to the rings, if needed. Get the bottom retaining screw and plug ready to go, with fresh O-rings (Parker #N1470 2-013 and Parker #N1470 2-017) and lube for the plug. Next, if you have it, flush the Sable's interior air with dry nitrogen, blown in from the bottom plug hole. Push the Sable chassis into place, and screw in the bottom retaining screw and screw-plug.

**Note: Do not over-tighten the bottom screw-plug, as the extra torque will cause the case bottom and battery pack to rotate, which may shear the battery cables.**

**Note: It is very important to be aware of where the O-ring is sitting on the titanium screw plug. If the O-rings are not sitting perfectly in their O-ring grooves, there will not be a perfect seal and could cause fatal damage to the unit.**

### **3.7 Field Installation**

The Sable is intended for use on marine flotation devices. It is important that the top of the Sable is located as high above the surface of the water as possible. Both the Iridium and GPS antennas are located at the top of the unit. It is recommended that users install Sable on a mast or superstructure at the top of their surface buoy or flotation device.

Care should be taken when installing to avoid putting metal bands close to the top of the unit where the antennas are located.

# Appendix A - Technical Specification

## Mechanical:

Material: Outside Housing: Titanium case  
 Inside Pull-out Chassis: Aluminum

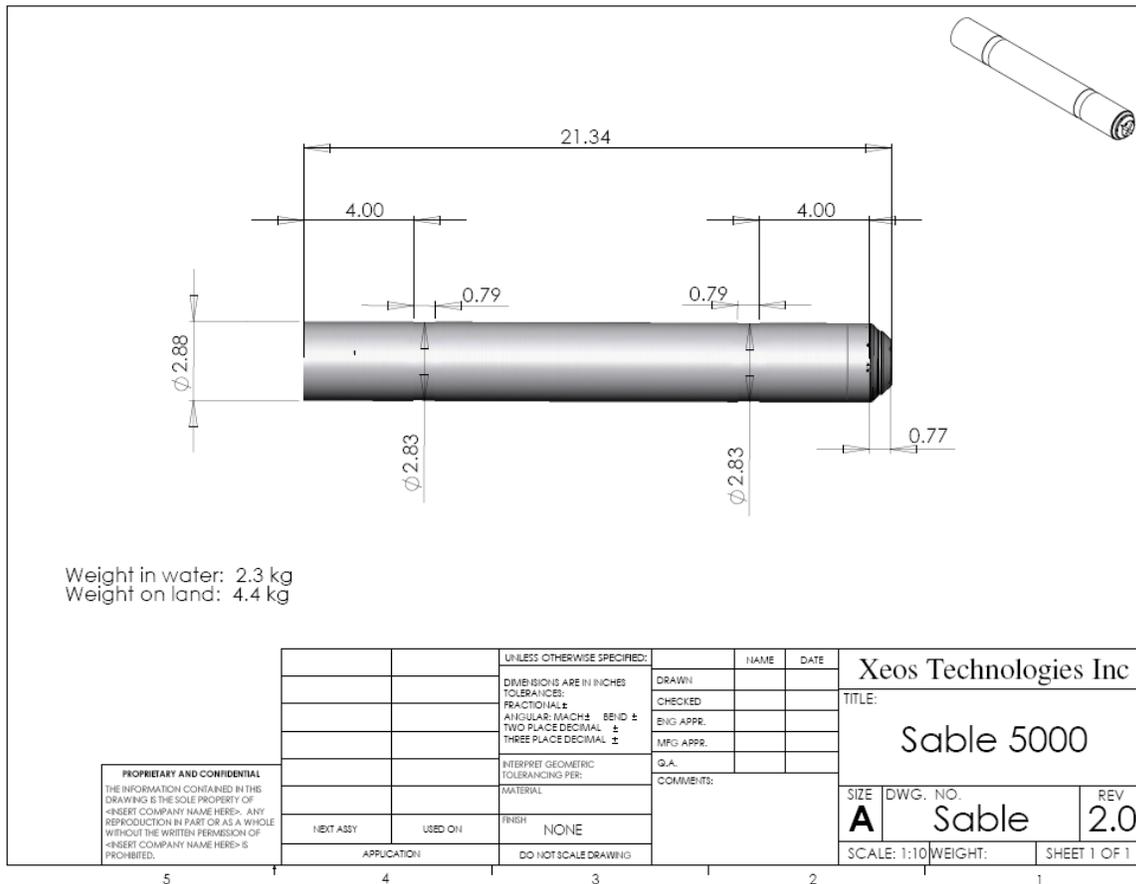
Dimensions: Length 21.34" (542mm) x 2.88" OD (73.15mm)

Weight: Out of water: 9.7 lbs (4.4 Kg)  
 In water: 5.0 lbs (2.3 Kg)

### O-rings:

Head O-ring: Parker #N1490 2-143  
 Industry Standard AS568A-143  
 Head back-up seal: sealonline.com #8-143/N1444  
 Parker #N0300 8-143  
 Bottom titanium screw-plug: Parker #N1470 2-013 nitrile rubber  
 Parker #N1470 2-017 nitrile rubber  
 Industry Standard AS568A-013

O-Ring Lube: Parker Super 'O'



## **Electrical:**

### **Power Supply**

Internal Battery Supply: 2x 9 (18) Alkaline C cells  
Voltage: +13.5 volts nominal  
Capacity: 20 Amp-hours  
Life expectancy: 2 years sub-surface deployment, followed by  
1 year surface or 2000 inbound/outbound messages

### **Electronics**

Iridium Transceiver: 9601-D-I  
Digital Controller: Xeos IRDC-2  
GPS Receiver: AA003252-G-BLK Jupiter GPS

### **Environmental**

Operating Temperature: -30° C to +60° C (-22° F to +140° F)  
Storage Temperature: -40° C to +80° C (-40° F to +176° F)

## **Warranty, Support and Limited Liability**

Xeos Technologies Inc. warrants the Sable Beacon to be free of defects in material or manufacturing for a period of one year following delivery. Liability is limited to repair or replacement of the defective part and will be done free of charge.

**LIMITED WARRANTY:** Xeos Technologies Inc. warrants that the product will perform substantially in accordance with the accompanying written materials for a period of one year from the date of receipt.

**CUSTOMER REMEDIES:** Xeos Technologies Inc. entire liability and your exclusive remedy shall be at Xeos Technologies Inc. option, either (a) return of the price paid or (b) repair or replacement of the product that does not meet Xeos Technologies Inc. Limited Warranty and that is returned to Xeos Technologies Inc. with a copy of your receipt. This Limited Warranty is void if failure of the product has resulted from accident, abuse, or misapplication. Any replacement product will be warranted for the remainder of the original warranty period or ninety (90) days, whichever is longer.

**NO OTHER WARRANTIES:** Xeos Technologies Inc. disclaims all other warranties, either express or implied, including but not limited to implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, with respect to the product or the accompanying written materials. This limited warranty gives you specific legal rights. You may have others, which vary from state to state.

**NO LIABILITY FOR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES:** In no event shall Xeos Technologies Inc. or its suppliers be liable for any damages whatsoever (including, without limitation, damages for loss of equipment, for loss of business profits, business interruption, loss of business information, or other pecuniary loss) arising out of the use of or inability to use this Xeos Technologies Inc. product, even if Xeos Technologies Inc. has been advised of the possibility of such damages.