



- [54] **LOCATION OF OVERBOARD PERSON OR OBJECT OR OF WATER-CHEMICAL INTERFACE**
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

Apparatus for determining and broadcasting the approximate location of a person or other object that has fallen overboard from a boat or other structure into a body of water. The apparatus includes a floatable object that is thrown into the water near the overboard person/object to broadcast the location of the object and the nearby overboard person. The floatable object includes: an activatable Satellite Positioning System (SPS) receiver/processor and antenna to receive SPS signals from two or more SPS satellites; an activatable location transmitter and transmitter interface to receive the SPS-determined location information from the SPS receiver/processor; a power supply to supply power to the SPS receiver/processor and the location transmitter; and activation means to activate the SPS receiver/processor and location transmitter. The floatable object may be attached to or include a drogue, unfurled in the water, to encourage the floatable object to move with the same velocity and in the same direction as the local water current. In another embodiment, the apparatus may include a chemical analyzer, positioned to be in contact with the ambient liquid, to analyze the local concentration of a target chemical in this liquid and to cause this concentration value to be broadcast. This embodiment is useful for monitoring the present location and/or rate of movement of the boundary between the ambient water and a chemical (such as oil) intentionally or unintentionally released into the water. The SPS receiver/processor and location transmitter can be activated by a water immersion switch, by a manually operable switch, by transmission of an activation signal from a nearby structure, such as a boat, or by any other suitable action. The SPS may be a Global Positioning System (GPS), a Global Orbital Navigational System (GLONASS), or any other suitable satellite-based location and navigation system.

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17 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets

