

THE MAXIRAN RADIOPOSITIONING SYSTEM (continued)

For the purposes of the following discussion, it is assumed that there are now three Beacons utilized. Now three circles are defined, instead of the two from the discussion above. The third distance, from Beacon "C" to the Interrogator (call it distance C1), defines a circle of radius length C1 centered about Beacon "C". The new situation is illustrated in Figure 4. Notice that with the three circles, there is only one location where all three circles can intersect. This eliminates the ambiguity associated with using only two Beacons. Now there is no I' to worry about. An additional advantage of using three Beacons is illustrated in Figure 5. Now the area of uncertainty has been reduced even though the tolerance of Beacon "C"'s measurement isn't any better than that of the other Beacons.

As the ship moves along, one or more of the Beacons may become unusable for various reasons; out of range, too small or too great an operating angle, etc. If additional Beacons are situated on shore, they may be interrogated, as desired, to greatly expand the range and usability of the system.