
Guidance to Users of Inflatable Lifejackets

Note to Ship Owners, Ship Operators and Managers, Masters, Officers and Crews of Merchant Ships, Skippers and Crews of Fishing Vessels and Owners and Crews of Yachts and Pleasure Vessels.

Summary

This Marine Guidance Note reminds users of inflatable lifejackets of the importance of regular inspections of inflatable lifejackets and correct procedures during donning.

The purpose of this MGN is to remind all users of inflatable lifejackets of the importance of carrying out routine and regular inspections and completing correctly all donning instructions.

The lives of users of inflatable lifejackets for both lifesaving purposes and as personnel protective equipment depend to a great extent in their equipment working when relied upon in an emergency situation. Reports of failure to provide the required level of safety can often be traced back to poor or non-existent routines for inspection and defect correction, or the equipment incorrectly donned.

Manufacturers of all approved inflatable lifejackets, their agents and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) through maintenance procedures, instructions and Merchant Shipping Regulation, provide details of the need for regular and routine inspection of these life saving appliances, and the way to conduct these routines.

The MCA, by way of this MGN, reminds all users of life saving and personnel protective equipment of the importance to carry out all manufacturers' recommended inspection routines timely and correctly. In addition, the donning instruction issued with life saving equipment is to be followed to ensure that correct usage is applied.

Items particularly identified as being important with inflatable lifejackets, include, but are not limited to:

- a. Inspection of straps, buckles and outer cover
- b. Safety harnesses, its stitching and buckles
- c. Abrasion damage to the inflatable lung
- d. Gas inflation cylinder for signs of corrosion
- e. Gas inflation cylinder for tightness of connection to inflation mechanism

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