

5.01 Lifejacket

A submission from Royal Yachting Association

Purpose or Objective

To ensure that lifejackets carried by crews are fully operational and certified by an approved manufacturers service station on an annual basis.

Proposal

5.01 Lifejacket

~~** 5.01.4 The person in charge shall personally check each lifejacket at least once annually.~~

Replace with

**** 5.01.4 Lifejacket Servicing**

- a) **An inflatable lifejacket shall be serviced at a manufacturer approved service station at least once annually if a service station is available in the boats Member National Authority country.**
- b) **If an approved service station is unavailable in the boats Member National Authority country, all reasonable efforts should be made to meet the requirement of 5.01.4 a).**

MoMu 0,1,2,3 c) Servicing certificates (original or a copy) shall be on board.

Current Position

As above

Reasons

Research was completed by the RORC Sub Committee with specialist input from Alistair Hackett, Ocean Safety and Richard Besse, SeaFront Marine Group.

1. All lifejackets carried on board should be serviced by one of the lifejacket manufacturers approved service stations on an annual basis to ensure the integrity of the fabrics, the fitting/installation of the of the inflation system and operation of any additional items (AIS Transponders, lights etc) are fitted according to manufacturer's requirements.
 2. There is no stipulation other than the manufacturers recommendation that lifejackets are serviced annually by their approved service stations. It should be noted that SOLAS Inflatable lifejackets are required, under SOLAS, to be serviced annually.
 3. Based on a research base of the servicing of 12740 lifejackets over a 12-month period it was found that 11% of lifejackets failed to pass the service testing procedures or would have not operated correctly. The principal reasons for failure were: -
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- Fabric failure:
 - Failure to pass the pressure test procedure (leaks etc)
 - Contaminated fabrics.
 - Failed stitching on the cover or harness webbing
 - General 'wear and tear'

It should be noted that manufacturers do not allow the fabric of lifejackets to be repaired/patched etc.
 - Incorrectly fitted CO₂ cylinders:
 - Empty, previously discharged cylinders
 - Loosely fitted cylinders, not screwed in far enough to allow activation
 - Heavily corroded cylinder causing fabric degradation
 - Automatic inflation 'head' failing to operate:
 - Due to previous operation and not being 're-armed' (correctly or otherwise)
 - Damaged or miss use
 - Incorrectly packed lifejackets resulting in incorrect inflation:
 - Owners failing to appreciate importance of ensuring that lifejackets are packed to the manufacturers specification to ensure correct inflation
 - Additional items need to be checked to ensure compatibility and that they are fitted so as to not impede the inflation of the bladder.
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