
Circular 2015/002

Approval of inflatable liferafts subject to extended service intervals not exceeding 30 months

Date: 1 January 2020

To whom it may concern,

The purpose of this circular is to inform all parties concerned that the Belgian Maritime Inspectorate has approved specific inflatable liferafts packed for extended service intervals according to SOLAS 74 Regulation III/20.8.3, to be installed on board of the Belgian flagged vessels. These approved liferafts and their manufacturers can be found in annex.

The use of these liferafts with extended service intervals is not allowed on fishing vessels. Passenger ships equipped with liferafts specially packed as above will comply with SOLAS regulation III/19.4.3 by carrying onboard or having ready access to a conventionally packed training raft of similar type and means of operation or by carrying a visual training aid which can simulate inflation and davit launching of such liferafts.

The liferafts must be in compliance with Council Directive 2014/90 on marine equipment as amended (also known as the MED Directive) when placed onboard and need to be approved in accordance with the requirements of SOLAS 74 Chapter III regulations 4, 13, 21, 26, 31 and 34 and Chapter X regulation 3, LSA Code, the resolution MSC.81(70) as amended and IMO MSC/Circ.811 and 2000 HSC Code.

In addition these liferafts must have successfully passed the tests according MSC.1/Circ.1328 of June 2009 on "Guidelines for the approval of inflatable liferafts subject to extended service intervals not exceeding 30 months. Compliance with the requirements of MSC.1/Circ.1328 must be part of the EC-Type Examination Certificate.

The liferafts are intended to be installed and must be inspected and serviced in accordance with the provisions of MSC.1/Circ.1328 and under the following conditions:

1. Servicing shall be carried out at 30 months intervals maximum, only at approved servicing stations which have additionally been appointed for this purpose by the manufacturers of the concerned liferafts in annex.
2. The packing consists of a hermetically sealed pouch within a GRP container.

As long as the hermetic seal has not been compromised, the 30 months service intervals will apply for the first 10 years of their service lives. Regular service intervals according to SOLAS regulation III/20.8.1.1 shall be followed when the age of the liferaft exceeds 10 years of age.

3. Hermetic seal verification must be performed at maximum intervals of 12 months from the date of last service or onboard inspection. This is done onboard the ship by qualified persons who have been adequately trained and certified by the manufacturer of the liferaft, according to instructions for onboard inspections as laid out by the manufacturer of the liferaft.

During this onboard inspections, the humidity level and possible leakage of the inflation gas is monitored. All readings are recorded and kept onboard together with the liferaft certificate for documentation and inspection purposes.

If the periodic onboard inspection reveals a loss of inflation gas, the liferaft should undergo a full service immediately. If excess humidity is present, the liferaft should be serviced and repacked within 3 months from inspection, or 30 months from repacking whichever comes first. If the seal verification reveals loss of hermetic seal for any reason the liferaft shall be serviced and repacked within 3 months from inspection, or 30 months from repacking whichever comes first.

4. All servicing tests prescribed in IMO Resolution A.761(18) which would have been carried out during the period of the extended service interval will be carried out by the servicing station at the next service after the nominal "due date" of that test.
 5. At this service, a new packing material of the hermetically sealed pouch within the GRP outer container must be used in case of signs of degradation, abrasion or other wear and tear that will affect the quality, purpose and lifespan of the packing material.
 6. Both the onboard inspection and servicing of the liferafts must be well planned as no postponement on the inspection and service intervals will be given. Also no exemption on the requirements regarding the certification of the inspection personnel or approval of the servicing station will be given.
 7. In addition to other markings, (the container of) the approved liferaft shall be fitted with a label from the manufacturer with the following information:
 - The liferaft is permitted for extended service intervals of 30 months at an approved service station,
 - The liferaft must be inspected onboard by a person certified for such purpose by (*name of the specific manufacturer*) at intervals not exceeding 12 months.
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Annex

The following inflatable liferafts packed for extended service intervals are approved:

Manufacturer	Liferaft	
	Type	Model
Viking Life-Saving Equipment A/S	S30	6 DK, 8 DK, 10 DK, 12 DK, 16 DK, 20 DK, 25 DK, 35 DK
	S30	12 DKF, 16 DKF, 20 DKF, 25 DKF, 35 DKF
Survitec Group Ltd	RFD Endura R (also known as 'Survitec ESR', 'DSB LR07E', 'Survitec Zodiac ESP', 'Crewsaver ESR' and 'Elliot ESR')	6 person, 8 person, 10 person, 12 person, 16 person, 20 person, 25 person throw-over / roll-over canopied Surviva MkIV inflatable liferaft hull, packaged for extended service intervals
	RFD Endura R (also known as 'Survitec ESR', 'DSB LR07E', 'Survitec Zodiac ESP', 'Crewsaver ESR' and 'Elliot ESR')	12 person, 16 person, 20 person, 25 person davit launched canopied Surviva MkIV inflatable liferaft hull, packaged for extended service intervals