

Safety Alert

SAN001

INFLATABLE LIFEJACKETS FAIL TO INFLATE

Recently a fisherman and a workboat crewman died when the inflatable lifejackets they were wearing failed to inflate. We suspect that the gas cylinders may have worked loose since the lifejackets were last inspected.

Manufacturers provide instructions and maintenance procedures for inflatable lifejackets which include details of regular and routine inspections.

LEARNING POINTS:

1. Owners of inflatable lifejackets should have them serviced and inspected in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions;
2. Owners should include the servicing and maintenance of inflatable lifejackets within their safety management system;
3. Users of inflatable lifejackets should be instructed in their use;
4. Owners should maintain a record of servicing, inspection and the training of users of inflatable lifejackets;
5. **Users of inflatable lifejackets should inspect them before putting them on.**
6. Inspection should include:
 - 6.1 Inspection of straps, buckles and the outer cover;
 - 6.2 Inspection of Safety harness, its stitching and buckles;
 - 6.3 Inspection of the inflatable lung for abrasion damage;
 - 6.4 Inspection of the gas inflation cylinder for signs of corrosion;
 - 6.5 Inspection of the gas inflation cylinder for tightness of connection to the inflation mechanism; and
 - 6.6 Inspection of the automatic inflation system, if fitted.