

24 January 1995

MARINE NOTICE NO 2 OF 1995

TO ALL YACHT OWNERS, YACHT MASTERS AND CREWS, YACHT CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS

EFFICIENCY OF SAFETY HARNESSSES

In a recent casualty a yachtsman was washed overboard in very bad weather conditions and was suspended over the safety rail by the safety harness he was wearing.

Due to the rough seas at the time, he was constantly being dunked, causing the weight on the safety harness to be alternately applied and released. In a short time he became very weakened, the harness worked its way up his upper body and, before he could be brought back on board by the only other person aboard, he slipped out of the harness.

HE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY LOST

The casualty investigation revealed that the safety harness was so designed that it gave only upper body support. It was a very simple web harness which relied on the safety line closing the front by being passed through two metal rings. There was no web between the legs or any other means of ensuring that it was securely fitted. Overall it was patently inadequate for its intended purpose!

It was noted with concern that;

- a) *many shops stock this type of harness and that they are popular with local yachtsmen, because of their low cost.*
- b) *there is no manufacturers' name or type approval on this patently inadequate but critical item of safety equipment.*

*In the interests of safety of life the Department recommends that the type of safety harness worn be such that the lower body is also supported. **This means either a full harness, with a strap between the legs and a separate closing arrangement at the front, or the jacket type which has good body support.***

It is trusted that everybody involved with yachting will seriously consider the above recommendation.



for DIRECTOR-GENERAL: TRANSPORT