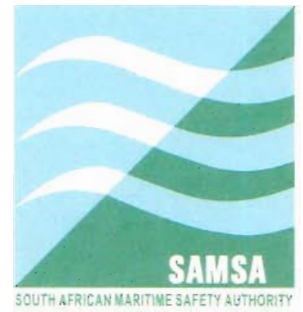


# SOUTH AFRICAN MARITIME SAFETY AUTHORITY



**Ref : SM6/6/1**  
**Ref : SM12/8/5/1**  
**Date : 5 January 1999**

## MARINE NOTICE NO. 1 OF 1999

**TO ALL MASTERS, SHIPOWNERS, AND OPERATORS OF SOUTH AFRICAN REGISTERED VESSELS, ALL PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND SUPPLIERS OF LIFE JACKET LIGHTS OF THE WATER ACTIVATED BATTERY TYPE**

### **FAILURE OF WATER ACTIVATED LIFE JACKET LIGHT BATTERIES DUE TO THE BREAKING OF THE SEALS**

1. It has come to the attention of SAMSA that the subject lifejacket light batteries when their seals are broken, swell (and sometimes burst) rendering them useless in the time of emergency.
2. It is suspected that when the seals, formed by plastic plugs are broken, the moisture in the environment in the compartment where the lifejackets are stored, initiates the battery process. Any swelling of the battery is indicative of the battery having been activated.
3. Owners and Masters have a responsibility to ensure that these lights are maintained in a proper working order at all times. Crew onboard are to be advised on the care and maintenance of water activated batteries and the following points cannot be over emphasised:
  - (a) Do not meddle with the seal. It is not to be dislodged.
  - (b) Keep the battery dry until it has to be used.
  - (c) Your life may depend on the light functioning properly.
  - (d) Regularly inspect the battery. Any swelling indicates that it has been activated and it should be replaced immediately.
4. The approval of these lights for use on South African ships comes up at regular intervals. If the magnitude of the problem regarding the activation is of a serious nature, SAMSA would rightly reconsider the renewal of the approval. However,

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#### **Safe Ships - Clean Seas**

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#### **Samsa Board**

Prof H Staniland (Chair), Ms N N Gobodo (Vice-Chair), Dr P J van Aswegen, Mr T C Dlamini, Capt O E Grapow,  
Capt R Watt (Provisional Chief Executive Officer)

SAMSA would not make such decision on scanty information. Therefore, for the year 1999 it would be appreciated if any failure of the light, especially where the failure has been caused by the inadvertent dislodging of the seals, could be reported to SAMSA.

5. All failures should be reported to:                    The Principal Officer  
SAMSA.  
Private Bag X 7025  
ROGGEBAAI  
8012

The brief report should include the following information:

- (a) Number of failures
  - (b) Make of battery
  - (c) Model of battery
  - (d) Date purchased
  - (e) Expiry date
6. Your co-operation in respect of the above request would be greatly appreciated.



**B R WATT**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**