

South African Maritime Safety Authority



Marine Notice No. 7 of 2010

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

TO: ALL PERSONS PURCHASING, SUPPLYING, INSPECTING OR SERVICING LIFERAFTS ABOARD SOUTH AFRICAN SHIPS.

Summary

SAMSA has approved the sale and use of certain liferafts aboard South African vessels which comply with IMO “Guidelines For Inflatable Liferafts Subject To Extended Service Intervals” and this notice brings this unusual development to the notice of the industry at large.

1. Background

South African vessel owners and operators have long complained about the expense and inconvenience of having to service inflatable liferafts annually, especially where the distances from a service centre results in the vessel being out of service for several days at a time.

While the justification for the existing service interval of 12 months has been verified through many years of experience and continuous observation of the product standard, IMO has produced detailed guidelines for the approval of liferafts which allow for extended service intervals.

Several liferaft manufacturers have been developing and testing systems which allow an extended service interval and some have been accepted into service by maritime administrations.

SAMSA has approved the supply and use of specified Viking liferafts and will consider other applicants when they apply in due course.

(Please refer to the latest Marine Notice detailing equipment approved for use on South African vessels, available on our website www.samsa.org.za)

2. Statutory arrangement

Regulation 25 of the Life Saving Equipment Regulations, 1968 requires that inflatable liferafts are generally serviced every 12 months, but this interval may be extended by a further 3 months by SAMSA. On the basis that IMO and other Maritime Authorities are allowing similar concessions for this developing technology, SAMSA as authorized by Regulation 47, hereby allows these liferafts to be substituted for those types of rafts which require annual servicing.

3. Conditions of the exemption

Liferafts are approved for extended service intervals under the following conditions:

3.1 They shall only be serviced at specially approved service stations, at intervals not exceeding 30 months for the first 10 years of their service lives, and annually thereafter in the same manner as required by Regulation 25;

3.2 As long as the hermetic seal has not been compromised, the 30 month service interval will apply. Hermetic seal verification must be performed at maximum intervals of 12 months from the date of last service. This must be carried out by personnel from the servicing stations in case of South African vessels both non-SOLAS and SOLAS vessels according to the manufacturer's instructions. If the seal verification reveals a loss of hermetic seal for any reason, the raft shall be serviced and repacked within 3 months, or 30 months from repacking if sooner;

3.3 All servicing test prescribed in IMO Resolution A.761(18) which would have been carried out during the period of the extended service interval must be carried out by the service station at the next service after the nominal "due date" of that test;

3.4 Readings of all tests and monitoring must be kept aboard with the liferaft certificate for documentation and inspection services;

3.5 In addition to any other required markings, the outer containers of specially packed and protected liferafts within this extended servicing scheme must carry the following label:

1. This liferaft has an extended service interval of 30 months and may only be serviced by a specially approved service station.
2. This liferaft must be inspected on board by a person certified for such purpose by a (Name) Approved Life-saving Equipment Service Station at intervals not exceeding 12 months.

3.6 When installed on a ship, measures should be taken to safeguard inspection personnel during onboard inspections in situ;

3.7 In addition to the conditions mentioned above, reference should be made to the full text of MSC.1/Circ.1328 when considering whether to fit liferafts with extended service intervals.

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