

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

COMMANDANT
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NAVIGATION AND VESSEL INSPECTION CIRCULAR NO. 12-61

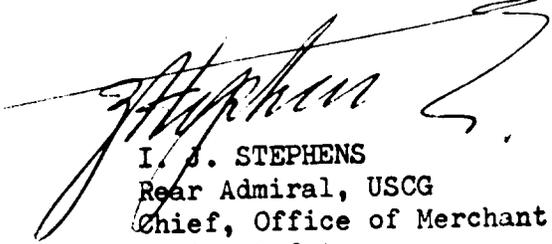
Subj: Inspection procedures for approved inflatable life rafts held in storage.

1. Purpose: The purpose of this circular is to establish a uniform inspection procedure for approved type inflatable life rafts which have been in storage for extended periods of time since manufacture.
2. Background: Approved type, fully equipped, inflatable life rafts are normally held in storage at the place of manufacture or at one of the manufacturer's approved servicing facilities until sold and placed on board a vessel. This period of storage may extend to one year from date of manufacture. Rafts stored for periods of ten months, for example, would require annual servicing approximately two months after installation in accordance with 46 CER 160.051-6. This added cost of servicing superimposed on the original cost of the rafts could discourage many ship owners from using this type of lifesaving equipment. Also, a purchaser of an inflatable life raft should expect the raft to be service and/or repair free for a reasonable period of time after the date of sale.
3. Action: Based upon the above discussion, the following inspection procedures may be carried out for fully equipped inflatable life rafts that have been in storage at place of manufacture or at manufacturer's approved servicing facility:
 - (a) Rafts stored up to 6 months from date of manufacture: Place in service without disassembling, and the first servicing as set forth in 46 CFR 160.051-6(e) will be due no later than one year from date of installation on board the vessel. In order to identify a raft in this category, the raft manufacturer shall furnish the master of the vessel or his representative with a copy of the bill of sale showing the manufacturer's name and address, the serial number of the raft, the date of manufacture, and the sales date. In addition, an affidavit shall be required showing the date that the raft was installed on board the vessel. Both the affidavit and bill of sale shall be maintained on board the vessel.
 - (b) Rafts stored from 6 months to 1 year from date of manufacture: Before placing in service, the rafts shall be opened by an approved servicing facility in the presence of a marine inspector to visually check the condition of the raft, check and weigh the CO₂ cylinder(s), and replace the flashlight batteries. After checking, the rafts shall be repacked by the approved servicing facility and stamped by the marine inspector using the procedure set forth in 46 CFR 160.051-6(e). Regular annual servicing as set forth in 46 CFR 160.051-6(e) will be due one year from date of this stamp.
 - (c) Rafts stored longer than 1 year from date of manufacture: Perform annual servicing per 46 CFR 160.051-6(e) before placing in service.

Upon completion of the first servicing as set forth in 46 CFR 160.051-6(e), as modified by paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) above, subsequent servicing requirements shall follow the procedures in paragraphs 33.25-15(d) of Subchapter D, .71.25-15(a)(6) of Subchapter H, and 91.25-15(a)(6)

of Subchapter I. These require that the rafts be serviced "every twelve months or not later than the next vessel inspection for certification provided the total time since date of last servicing does not exceed fifteen months."

4. Effective date: Upon receipt.



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Dist. (SDL No. 73)
A: None
B: n(35); c(10); .(5); 1(3); bdp(1)
C: m(4); o(2)
D: i(2); k(1)
E: m(1)