



United States Coast Guard

Marine Inspection Office Europe



Lylantse Plein 1 Box 189
2908 LH Capelle a/d IJssel
The Netherlands

Phone: 31 (0) 10 442 4458
Fax: 31 (0) 10 450 4752
acteurinspections@uscg.mil

MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN (MSIB) 03-08 CHANGE 1

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Inspection Procedures for USCG Approved Liferaft Servicing Facilities

The purpose of this USCG Activities Europe Advisory is to provide a standard for submitting an application for inspection and scheduling procedures for USCG Approved liferaft servicing facilities. All life saving equipment products are to be tested or inspected in the presence of an USCG Marine Inspector and meet the requirements of applicable standards in order to be approved and certified for installation on board U.S. flagged vessels in accordance with the Certificates of Approval.

To obtain and maintain USCG approval as an “approved servicing facility” for a particular manufacturer's inflatable liferafts, a facility must meet the requirements and follow the procedures as set forth in 46 CFR 160.151-41 Approval of servicing facilities. Whenever servicing of a USCG approved liferafts takes place, each servicing facility must allow USCG Marine Inspectors or third-party inspectors accepted by the OCMI access to the place where the servicing occurs.

I. Procedures for Facility Approval:

- Approvals for prototype equipment design are granted by USCG Headquarters, Lifesaving and Fire Safety Division (*Commandant (CG-5214)*) (+1-202-267-1444).
- <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg5214/>

II. USCG Activities Europe will consider an approval for a servicing inspection request when:

- The manufacturer has submitted a request for inspection 30 days prior to the proposed inspection date.
- Is satisfied that provisions have been made for the inspection, testing and servicing of production line including inspection of manufacturer's quality control procedures.

III. Submission of Liferaft Servicing Inspection Requests:

- By email to: acteurinspections@uscg.mil (preferred)

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- i. The subject line for an inspection request shall include:
Name of Facility + Lifesaving Inspection Request
(example: XYZ Servicing Co. + Lifesaving Inspection Request)

- By mail to:
Commanding Officer, USCG Activities Europe
Attn: Chief, Inspections Department
Lylantse Plein 1
2908 LH Capelle a/d IJssel, The Netherlands

IV. Before servicing an inflatable liferaft under the servicing facility's Coast Guard approval, the owner or operator of the facility must tell the cognizant OCMI for each liferaft to be serviced;

- The make and size of the liferaft;
- The age of the liferaft;
- Whether the liferaft is due for a five-year inflation test;
- Whether the liferaft is due for a davit launch load test; and
- To which vessel the liferaft belongs.

When requesting permission to service USCG Approved life rafts, servicing stations are requested to utilize the online portal which is located at http://www.uscg.mil/acteur/LifeSaving_request.asp. E-mail notifications are not required if the request has been submitted via the on-line portal. USCG Activities Europe will respond via e-mail when granting permission, advising of additional requirements, or requesting further information. Please ensure that all of the applicable fields on the on-line portal are properly and completely filled out.

The portal can also be accessed by visiting the Activities Europe website at <http://www.uscg.mil/acteur/>. Once on the homepage, click "Marine Inspection Requests" followed by "Application for Life Raft Servicing."

V. The OCMI will inform the servicing facility whether the servicing of the liferaft must be witnessed by an inspector. If the OCMI requires the servicing of the liferaft to be witnessed by an inspector;

- The servicing facility must arrange a schedule with the OCMI that will allow a Coast Guard inspector to travel to the site where the servicing is to occur;
- The owner or operator of the servicing facility, by permission of the OCMI, may arrange for the servicing to be witnessed instead by a third-party inspector accepted by the OCMI if a Coast Guard marine inspector is not available in a timely manner; and
- The servicing facility must not begin servicing the liferaft until the inspector arrives at the site.

VI. No deviation from servicing-manual procedures may occur without the prior approval of the OCMI. To request the approval of a deviation, the owner or operator of the servicing facility shall notify the OCMI of the proposed deviation from the procedures, and must explain to the OCMI the need for the deviation. These submissions must include:

- A copy of the Certificates of Approval issued by the USCG for the servicing facility;

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- Three proposed, rank prioritized, dates for the inspection. If no rank priority is provided it will be concluded that any of the provided dates are equally acceptable to the business;
- Contact details of the production or servicing facility including name, mailing address, physical location (if different from the mailing address), primary and secondary points of contact, primary and secondary telephone numbers, and primary and secondary e-mail addresses.
- The name(s) of the competent servicing technician(s);
- Identification of the manufacturer(s) of the liferafts the facility will service;
- Any limits or special conditions that should apply to the approval of the facility; and
- Any specification or information pertinent to help with the inspection and testing of the product for approval.

VII. USCG Activities Europe will review the submission and, provided the information is complete and compliant with the requirements set forth in the relevant sections of the Regulations, SOLAS, and within this advisory approval will be granted. Failure to submit a proper inspection application may result in a request denial or delay.

- Once approval is granted for inspection, an Activity Number will be assigned along with an inspection team. An Activity Number will serve as the reference number for each piece of equipment to be tested. All subsequent communications regarding a particular equipment inspection or certification should be referenced by Activity Number.
- The approval is granted only for the product(s) identified therein, and, only when such product(s) is manufactured in accordance with the relevant requirements of this standard, the Certificate of Approval, and every production line manufactures the product to the same standard as the approved prototype.

VIII. Manufacturers are required to maintain records relating to the quality control and servicing carried out in accordance with the Regulations and LSA Code. These records are to be made available for review upon attendance by a USCG Marine Inspector.

IX. As partners in the marine safety industry, manufacturers and servicing operators are encouraged to submit feedback to USCG Activities Europe. Feedback pinpoints immediate concerns that affect partner relationships. As a result we are able to address issues immediately, before they become real problems. Surveys are available at USCG Activities' Europe Website: <http://www.uscg.mil/acteur/>

X. Additional guidance and information can be found at the links below:

Lifesaving and Fire Safety Division (*Commandant (CG-5214)*)
<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg5214/>

USCG Activities' Europe Website:
<http://www.uscg.mil/acteur/>

IMO MSC Circular 980:
http://www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id%3D4697/980-HHo.sa.pdf

Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.uscg.mil/acteur/

For additional information or clarification regarding this Marine Safety Bulletin, please contact Lieutenant Corydon Heard at the above number or address.



J. W. KOSTER
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Officer in Charge of Marine Inspection