

NAVIGATION AND VESSEL INSPECTION CIRCULAR NO. 1-92, CHANGE 2

*Electronic Version for Distribution on the World Wide Web*

Subj: CH-2 to NVIC 1-92, IMPLEMENTATION OF LIFESAVING EQUIPMENT  
REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL FISHING VESSELS

Ref: (a) Commercial Fishing Industry Vessel Regulations, 56 FR 40364 and 46 CFR part 28

1. PURPOSE. This Circular changes enclosure (1) to Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular (NVIC) No. 1-92, by temporarily revising the allowed carrying capacity of certain unapproved inflatable liferafts for commercial fishing vessels
2. DISCUSSION.
  - a. Except for a liferaft installed on board a commercial fishing industry vessel before September 15, 1991, each liferaft used to meet the regulations for survival craft on commercial fishing vessels must be a Coast Guard approved liferaft. This is the requirement established in reference (a), sections 28.105(b) and 28.120(d).
  - b. Unapproved liferafts, installed before September 15, 1991, may continue to be used under certain circumstances explained in NVIC 1-92, enclosure (1). The allowed carrying capacity of unapproved liferafts is addressed in paragraph 1.c of that enclosure as the lesser of -
    - (1) the number of persons claimed by the manufacturer; or
    - (2) the area of the floor in square meters divided by 0.335 (or, the area in square feet divided by 3.6). This area shall be the clear area of the floor inside the inflated buoyancy tubes.
  - c. While this floor space standard for unapproved liferafts has generally worked well, it has created some hardships for owners of two liferaft models that have substantially less floor space than the standard established in NVIC 1-92, enclosure (1). Specifically, the unapproved Givens Buoy six-person liferaft provides 0.32 m<sup>2</sup> (3.48 ft<sup>2</sup>) per person, and the eight-person liferaft provides 0.28 m<sup>2</sup> (3.04 ft<sup>2</sup>) per person. The NVIC requires these two liferafts to be rerated for five persons, and six persons, respectively. (Note that the manufacturer's Coast Guard approved liferafts have adequate capacity ratings.)

NAVIGATION AND VESSEL INSPECTION CIRCULAR NO. 1-92, CHANGE 2

- d. On January 26, 1994, the Coast Guard's Commercial Fishing -Industry Vessel Advisory Committee considered the issue of carrying capacity of unapproved liferafts. It was the committee's consensus that adequate floor space for survivors in inflatable liferafts was important, and that the 0.335 m<sup>2</sup> (3.6 ft<sup>2</sup>) per person standard was not unreasonable. At the same time, the committee recognized the financial hardship that owners of these liferafts could be subjected to if required to reduce their crew sizes or buy new liferafts. The committee also took into consideration that owners bought the liferafts in good faith, expecting that they could be used for their stated capacity indefinitely.
  - e. By majority vote, the committee recommended that the Coast Guard accept the unapproved Givens Buoy six-person liferaft as being sufficient to accommodate six persons for a period of five more years, after which they would have to be rerated for five persons. The committee declined to make a recommendation on the eight-person liferaft.
  - f. The Coast Guard accepts the committee's recommendation. In addition, application of the same capacity standard (0.32 m<sup>2</sup> (3.48 ft<sup>2</sup>) per person) to the eight-person liferaft would result in a seven-person capacity. The Coast Guard has decided to accept this liferaft as adequate for seven persons for the same period of time.
3. IMPLEMENTATION. Until January 1, 1999, -
- a. Six-person unapproved Givens Buoy liferafts, with a floor area of 1.94 m<sup>2</sup> (20.9 ft<sup>2</sup>), will be accepted for the purposes of 46 CFR 28.120(d) as having a capacity of six persons. After that date, these liferafts will be accepted for five persons.
  - b. Eight-person unapproved Givens Buoy liferafts, with a floor area of 2.26 m<sup>2</sup> (24.3 ft<sup>2</sup>), will be accepted for the purposes of 46 CFR 28.120(d) as having a capacity of seven persons. After that date, these liferafts will be accepted for six persons.
  - c. The manufacturer of the affected liferafts will provide servicing facilities with information on the proper way to rerate and mark these liferafts.



A. E. HENN

Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard  
Chief, Office of Marine Safety,  
Security and Environmental Protection