



Roinn na Mara agus Acmhainní Náúúrtha

Marine Notice
No 7 of 2002

To all Fishing Vessel Owners, Agents, Skippers, Fishing Vessel Crew Members, Fishermen, and Chandlers.

GUIDANCE ON THE SELECTION OF PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES (PFDs) FOR USE ON-BOARD FISHING VESSELS

WITHDRAWAL OF MARINE NOTICE NO. 14 OF 2000

Marine Notice No. 14 of 2000: Use of Lifejackets (LJ) & Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) is hereby withdrawn.

GENERAL

The Department of the Marine and Natural Resources wishes to remind skippers and those working onboard fishing vessels about the new Regulations on Personal Flotation Devices, PFDs, which came into operation on the 1st of March 2002.

These regulations are the Fishing Vessel (Personal Flotation Devices) Regulations, 2001 (S.I. No. 586 of 2001). These regulations apply to all crewmembers on board fishing vessels, other than those registered under the laws of another state. The regulations require that every fishing vessel carry a suitable personal flotation device for every person onboard. The personal flotation device shall be worn at all times by the crew when on an exposed deck, or for undecked vessels when on board the vessel, whether at sea, in harbour or coming to and from moorings. The skipper shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that all crewmembers wear a personal flotation device. The criteria, which the regulations refer to for determining suitability, include:

1. The device is sufficient to give a person using it a positive buoyancy in waters which are likely to be encountered where the vessel on which it is required to be used is reasonably likely to be.
2. The device is appropriate to the body weight of the person who is to wear it and also to the type of work being done.
3. The device has on it the CE conformity marking consisting of the initials "CE" taking the form of the specimen given (shown below) in Annex IV of Council Directive 89/686/EEC of 21 December 1989 (as amended by Council Directive 93/68/EEC of 22 July 1993 and Council Directive 96/58/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 3 September 1996).



TYPES OF PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES

The term personal flotation device is an all-encompassing term, which covers all forms of personal protective equipment, intended to help keep a person afloat. These range from 'CE' marked lifejackets through to 'CE' marked buoyancy aids. The following table lists the different types of PFDs acceptable under this legislation and a brief description is given together with suggestions for areas of use.

Type and Markings	Suggested Uses
 EN 399 - 275N	For offshore use in extreme conditions when heavy protective clothing is being worn or when extra loads are being carried. Turns unconscious wearers face up in water under almost all circumstances. May be suitable for use in situations where there may be a delay in rescue.
 EN 396 - 150N	For swimmers and non-swimmers of any age. For offshore use. Turns most unconscious wearers face up in water (depending on the clothing worn). These may be suitable for use in tidal waters or when foul weather clothing is being worn and where the wearers may not be capable of helping themselves due to injury or exhaustion.
 EN 395 - 100N	For swimmers of any age. For use in relatively sheltered waters, will not turn unconscious wearers face up in water (depending on the clothing worn). May be suitable in instances where the wearers remain capable of helping themselves.
 EN 393 - 50N	Only for good swimmers and for use in sheltered waters where help is close at hand. Will not hold the face of an unconscious wearer clear of the water. For adults only (+40kg). May be suitable in circumstances where more bulky or buoyant devices could impair the user's activity or actually endanger them. Not a lifejacket.

Note: EuroNorm (EN) refers to European wide standards, which are used for ensuring the uniformity and minimum standards for products and services.

The above table is for guidance only and skippers are to assess the risks appropriate to their area of operation and select personal flotation devices appropriately.

NOTES FOR SELECTION OF PFDs

The selection of PFDs is a complex issue and it is dependent on many factors such as area of operation for the vessel, seasonal variations, night and day time work, type of work being carried out, ease of use etc.... In this section we have attempted to deal with these issues and to highlight concerns and issues which should be considered in selecting a PFD.

Inherently buoyant flotation suits are popular especially in cold weather. A particular benefit of these suits is their thermal protection offered against cold-water shock and hypothermia. However, in warm weather they become very hot to work in. Fishermen should also be aware that because the suit floats in a horizontal position an unconscious person might float either face-up or face-down.

Inflatable PFDs such as those complying with EN 396 and EN 399 are lightweight and less restrictive and can be worn comfortably in both warm and cold weather. They can also be fitted with automatic inflation devices and may turn the wearer face upwards in the water, depending on clothing worn. These types of PFDs are also available in versions where they are incorporated into clothing such as oilskins and work suits.

If the wearer is unconscious when entering the water, only automatically activated devices will inflate and fishermen who have the manually activated device must be aware of this limitation.

Consideration should also be given to fitting personal flotation devices with lights. These lights should comply with the EuroNorm standard EN394.

GUIDANCE FOR CORRECT USE OF PFDs

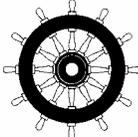
1. Inflatable personal flotation devices must be worn over all clothing and not underneath. This is to ensure that there is sufficient space for the device to inflate and that the wearer's breathing is not restricted.
2. PFDs should be worn correctly to prevent them from riding up above the wearer's shoulders.
3. Wearers should be fully familiar with the operation of their inflatable PFDs both manually and automatically.
4. Inflatable PFDs should be checked regularly and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. As a minimum, checks should include ensuring that the gas cartridges have not been

punctured, that the zips, buckles, fasteners and webbing straps are functioning correctly and that lights, if fitted, are functioning.

5. Automatically inflatable PFDs, which operate by means of a soluble bobbin, may activate in error if left in a damp condition. When inflatable PFDs are not being worn they should be hung to dry vertically to ensure that all moisture drains away from the bobbin. Covers are available which reduce the problem of accidental inflation.

ABANDON SHIP LIFEJACKETS

It is important not to confuse personal flotation devices which are required under the Fishing Vessel (Personal Flotation Devices) Regulations, 2001 (S.I. No. 586 of 2001) with the abandon ship lifejackets which all fishing vessels must carry. Personal flotation devices are in addition to these lifejackets and both types must be carried on board. The abandon ship lifejackets must fulfil the requirements of the IMO SOLAS/EU Marine Equipment Directive (MED) and they are required to be carried as part of the normal lifesaving equipment for all fishing vessels. IMO SOLAS/EU MED lifejackets are marked as follows.

Type and Markings	Suggested Uses
 IMO SOLAS/EU Marine Equipment Directive	Use for abandoning ship. Required under Merchant Shipping Legislation. Not intended for everyday use as they are generally bulky and they need to be kept in good condition for use in abandon ship situations.

SUMMARY

This Marine Notice has attempted to provide guidance to support the regulations requiring all crewmembers on fishing vessels to wear personal flotation devices. The skipper of a fishing vessel should identify the hazards faced by the crew and based on this assess the risks and select suitable personal flotation devices based on the guidance given in this marine notice.

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