

Notice to ship Owners, Managers, Operators, Masters, Owners' Representatives,
Approved Nautical Inspectors, Recognised Organisations and surveyors

Vacuum-packed Immersion Suits

The Faroese Maritime Authority is aware that approved immersion suits are being sold as vacuum-packed units. Such vacuum-packed suits cannot be unpacked and inspected as prescribed in SOLAS Chapter III. However, the Authority accepts this type of packaging and considers that these suits comply with the requirements of SOLAS regulations III/20.7 and 36, provided that the following conditions are met:

- The manufacturer's inspection and maintenance recommendations must be followed to ensure that the condition of each immersion suit and anti-exposure suit remains suitable for immediate use. In this respect, attention is drawn to MSC/Circ.1047 and MSC/Circ.1114
- Instructions for the monthly inspection of vacuum-packed immersion suits, prepared by the manufacturer or its representative, must be available on board. The Authority accepts such instructions as a substitute for the monthly inspection procedure described in MSC/Circ.1047.
- A sufficient number of immersion suits in standard packaging, of the same type as the vacuum-packed suits, must be available to the crew for training and drill purposes. Such suits shall be clearly marked to be used for training and drill purposes only
- The packaging of the suits must be inspected in accordance with SOLAS regulations III/20.7 and 36. If damage or loss of vacuum is detected, the suits must either be removed from the packaging and inspected in accordance with MSC/Circ.1047 and MSC/Circ.1114 or sent for inspection and repackaging by the supplier or a service station.
- MSC/Circ.1114 recommends that immersion suits be pressure-tested every three years, but the circular does not cover vacuum-packed immersion suits. The Authority accepts that pressure testing of vacuum-packed immersion suits is carried out at intervals specified by the manufacturer. If the manufacturer has not specified such intervals, MSC/Circ.1114 shall be followed.
- All immersion suits older than 10 years of age should be serviced annually at an approved service station.
- Immersion suits that have been removed from vacuum packaging must be treated as suits in standard packaging with regard to maintenance and inspection in accordance with SOLAS Chapter III.
- The Administration and inspection bodies may, in connection with the inspection of vacuum-packed immersion suits, require that one or more packages be opened for inspection.

For any queries on this Notice, please contact fma@fma.fo

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Sjóvinnustýrið / Faroese Maritime Authority