

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

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NAVIGATION AND VESSEL INSPECTION CIRCULAR NO. 2-75

Subj: Alteration of Existing Raft⁵ to Comply with Improved Inflation Standards

Ref : (a) Federal Register¹ Vol. 39, No. 50, Wednesday, March 13, 1974 (Pages 9668 - 9669)
(b) Federal Register³ Vol. 39, No. 251, Monday, December 30, 1974 (Pages 45059 - 45060)

1. Purpose. This instruction establishes the procedures for modifying the inflation systems of existing rafts to comply with the revised inflation requirements published in Reference (a).
2. Background. Reference (a) published revisions to 46 CFR 160.051-5(c)(4) and 5(e)(11) to improve the inflation performance of Coast Guard approved rafts. Specifically, it had to be demonstrated that a raft at a temperature of -22~ F. could achieve its designed shape with the canopy fully erect within three (3) minutes after actuation of its gas charged inflation cylinders. In addition, with the same gas charge, the raft had to withstand 150~ F. and inflate satisfactorily without failure of its seams or fabric. Reference (b) terminated the approval of all rafts shown by testing not to comply with the new inflation standards and also prescribed the cutoff dates under which existing rafts could continue in service.
3. Discussion. The rafts affected by this circular are those manufactured prior to January 1, 1975, having approval numbers 160.051/49 or lower. The rafts of this numbered series may continue to be used without alteration of their inflation systems onboard Great Lakes vessels until January 1, 1976, and on all other vessels until January 1, 1980. The following procedures are for identifying the rafts that have had their inflation systems altered in accordance with instructions established by the raft manufacturers and approved by the Commandant of the Coast Guard.
4. Action.
 - a. Except for the Uniroyal rafts described below, Coast Guard marine inspectors at the servicing facilities will permit rafts having approval numbers .160.051/49 or lower to be retrofitted with new inflation components in conformity with instructions of the manufacturer given in either his servicing manual or servicing bulletin(s) that have been reviewed and approved by the Commandant of the Coast Guard.
 - b. After a raft has been retrofitted, it shall be marked with the words "MOD TEMP", the inspector's initials, and the date of the retrofitting in both of the following locations: (1) On the fabric nameplate of the raft's buoyancy tubes or adjacent thereto, and (2) On the metal inspection plate attached to the raft's container.

- c. Rafts of the above numbered series, retrofitted and identified as above, are not subject to the cutoff dates described in Paragraph (3). above and may be used as long as they remain in good and serviceable condition.
- d. The above procedures permitting retrofitting are not applicable to the rafts manufactured by Uniroyal (previously the U. S. Rubber Co.). Such rafts have not been requalified under the new inflation standards and their further use is limited to January 1, 1976, on the Great Lakes and January 1, 1980, elsewhere.

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