

IMCA Safety Flash 13/16

May 2016

These flashes summarise key safety matters and incidents, allowing wider dissemination of lessons learnt from them. The information below has been provided in good faith by members and should be reviewed individually by recipients, who will determine its relevance to their own operations.

The effectiveness of the IMCA safety flash system depends on receiving reports from members in order to pass on information and avoid repeat incidents. Please consider adding the IMCA secretariat (imca@imca-int.com) to your internal distribution list for safety alerts and/or manually submitting information on specific incidents you consider may be relevant. All information will be anonymised or sanitised, as appropriate.

A number of other organisations issue safety flashes and similar documents which may be of interest to IMCA members. Where these are particularly relevant, these may be summarised or highlighted here. Links to known relevant websites are provided at www.imca-int.com/links. Additional links should be submitted to webmaster@imca-int.com

Any actions, lessons learnt, recommendations and suggestions in IMCA safety flashes are generated by the submitting organisation. IMCA safety flashes provide, in good faith, safety information for the benefit of members and do not necessarily constitute IMCA guidance, nor represent the official view of the Association or its members.

Summary

This safety flash contains three safety alerts informing members about possible problems with certain kinds of equipment and services. Members are reminded that it is worthwhile to spend time and effort ensuring that products, equipment and services are genuine and not counterfeit, and that they are in good and appropriate condition for use.

1 Counterfeit Admiralty Products

The United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) has issued a warning over the dangers posed to the safety of vessels, crews and cargoes by counterfeit nautical charts and publications, and has produced a simple guide to help identify genuine Admiralty products.

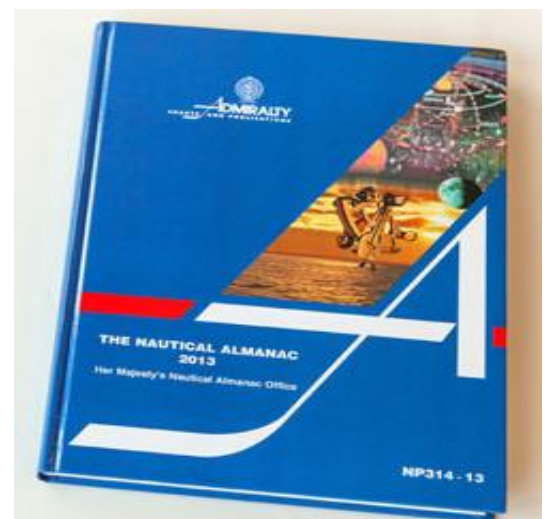
The UKHO has recently observed an increase in the number of counterfeit versions of its Admiralty charts and publications in circulation. John Dawson, Head of Marketing at the UKHO, said:

“The UKHO urges all purchasers, users, inspectors and regulators to be vigilant for counterfeit Admiralty charts and publications. Because counterfeit versions have not been through the same rigorous checking procedures as official Admiralty charts and publications, they cannot be trusted for voyage planning or navigational purposes. As well as failing to comply with SOLAS carriage regulations and possibly also Flag State and Port State Control regulations, the use of counterfeit charts and publications poses a serious risk to vessel safety.

“We are actively seeking to stop the production and sale of counterfeit copies of our charts and publications and have raised our concerns with the International Maritime Organisation, the International Hydrographic Organisation and Flag States. We also encourage anyone that suspects they may be in possession of counterfeit products to get in touch with us.”

UKHO has produced a simple guide to help users and inspectors to distinguish official Admiralty charts and publications from counterfeit versions. Official Admiralty charts bear the Admiralty ‘Flying A’ watermark within the paper and will carry a ‘thumb label’ strip on the reverse with the Admiralty logo, chart number, geographical area, barcode and date.

Suspect charts and publications can also be identified by comparing them against official Admiralty versions, where variations may be spotted in the look, feel and weight of the product, the colour tone and strength of the ink, the folds on charts and the height and binding quality of publications.



Anyone with suspicions over the authenticity of their Admiralty charts and publications is asked to contact the UKHO by emailing customerservices@ukho.gov.uk. Copies of the UKHO's guide to identifying genuine Admiralty products can also be downloaded from <http://bit.ly/admiralty-genuine>.

2 Life Jacket Failures

IMCA's attention has been drawn to a number of cases of life jacket failure. In recent months a contractor found that at least seven life jackets had failed for the same reason. Some of these jackets failed on their first annual test and inspection. The failure was due to a hole in the bladder and the hole is in the same place in each case.

The manufacturer informed their buyer that the damage was due to pressure applied to the front of the jacket when in use. This was causing the folded bladder to press up against the 'Hammar' automatic inflation device within the jacket, which in turn was causing damage to the bladder. The manufacturer is now fitting rubber covers to the automatic inflation device.



Showing location of damage to bladder



Hammar device without rubber cap



With new rubber cap fitted

Members are encouraged to carry out a spot check and close examination of all life jackets fitted with automatic inflation devices and assess if any damage is occurring.

Consideration may be given to returning the jackets to a service station and requesting the rubber cap be fitted in addition to a service which includes an inflation test.

3 Product Awareness: Chains for Lifting Harding FF1200 Lifeboat

Lifeboat manufacturer Harding has published the following bulletin regarding certain lifting chain components used for lifeboats of the type FF1200. During inspection of this lifting equipment, a damaged link was discovered that was cracked through.



Harding recommends that existing chains including links and hooks should be carefully examined. Further information can be found at <http://media.sertifiseringsorganet.no/2016/03/Product-Awareness-Notice-4330.pdf>.