

Technical Bulletin

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Maintenance of immersion suits

Suits should be sent for servicing every 3 years

On immersion suits "more than 7 years old"* , the glue joints at the hood and at the gloves can deteriorate. This causes the joint to open and allows water to seep into the suit. The thermal function of the suit is lost although the suit will remain buoyant. Monthly inspections of the suit onboard the vessel is prescribed by SOLAS, but not how this inspection should be carried out. Suits should be sent for servicing every 3 years but unfortunately, in many cases they are not. It is therefore recommended that all suits over 3 years old that have not been serviced for 3 years are serviced at the first available opportunity.

Monthly checks should cover the following:

1. The bag to be intact and the instructions legible.
2. No holes, tears, etc. to exist in the material.
3. The front zip opens, closes and is lubricated.
4. The light functional and the expiry date valid.
5. Check the glue joint at the hood and gloves by trying to pull the material from the suit.
If the material easily comes away from the neoprene, the suit may not be used and must be sent immediately for repair.
6. Reflectors and whistle to be firmly attached.
7. Check the lifting becket and buddy line with the snap hook.
8. Gluing on the soles and adjustment straps on the boots to be in good condition.

9. If the production date or the latest servicing date exceeds 3 years then the suit should be sent for servicing as soon as possible.

10. Suits in good order should be repacked in the bag with the front zip open.

If there is any doubt about the functioning of the suit it should be sent to a servicing station for inspection and/or repair and this noted in the maintenance schedule.



Sources of information:

UK P&I Ship Inspection / Loss Prevention Department

* Viking Life-Saving Equipment. <http://www.viking-life.com>