

PFD INSPECTIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) and lifejackets are essential for maritime safety, providing critical buoyancy that can save lives in the event of a water emergency.

To ensure they function effectively when needed, regular inspection and maintenance are vital.

Inspection and maintenance tools for PFDs or lifejackets.

- **INSPECTIONS**
- **MAINTENANCE**



BC Forest Safety

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PFD INSPECTIONS AND MAINTENANCE



INSPECTIONS: Regular inspections of PFDs or lifejackets will help ensure any defects or damages are identified. Inspections should follow manufacturer guidelines and regulatory standards to ensure safety. Things to look for:

- **Hardware Condition:** Check for broken, deformed, or corroded metal or plastic components.
- **Webbing and Straps:** Look for rips, tears, or detachment from anchor points.
- **Material Integrity:** Tug gently to test for rotting or deterioration.
- **Fabric and Seams:** Identify any large rips, tears, or open seams that could lead to loss of buoyant material.
- **Buoyant Material:** Ensure it is not hardened, compressed, waterlogged, oil-soaked, or showing signs of mildew or fungus.
- **Retention of Buoyancy:** Confirm that buoyant material is securely held in place and has not shifted or degraded.
- **Visibility Features:** Ensure retro-reflective material is present and in good condition. Brightly coloured vests or jackets improve visibility.
- **Inflatable PFDs:**
 - Check the hydrostatic inflator (5-year expiry).
 - Ensure the status indicator shows green. If red, replace the cartridge.
 - Be cautious using inflatable PFDs in industrial settings—inner bladders can be easily punctured. Perform a buoyancy test on self inflating PFDs every six months.
- Maintain an Inspection Logbook to document all inspections, repairs and replacements.

MAINTENANCE:

Cleaning

- Clean regularly to prevent dirt and salt buildup.
 - Use mild soap and fresh water.
 - Avoid harsh chemicals or solvents.
 - Allow to dry completely before storing.
 - Store in a dry, well-ventilated, and accessible location on board.

Repairs

- Patch or stitch minor tears.
- Replace damaged straps, buckles, or zippers.
- Inspect and service inflation mechanisms on inflatable models.

Replacement

- Follow manufacturer guidelines for lifespan and replacement.
- Replace any PFD that:
 - Fails a buoyancy test.
 - Shows significant wear or damage.
- Always **notify your supervisor** when removing a PFD from service so a replacement can be ordered.



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