



SAFETY BULLETIN

No. 1

LIFE-SAVING APPLIANCES

HYDROSTATIC RELEASE UNIT (HRU) – UNAUTHORISED REFURBISHED HAMMAR H20 HRU

It has been brought to the attention of the MCA that refurbished Hammar H20 HRUs have been placed on board ships for use with liferafts. Such HRUs should not be refurbished and are not guaranteed to work in an emergency which could result in a serious risk to safety. If such a unit is discovered on board it should be withdrawn from service immediately. This Bulletin details the characteristics of genuine Hammar H20 HRUs. This information should be used by all ships to ensure that only genuine units are fitted.

Background

The CM Hammar H20 Hydrostatic Release Unit (HRU) is designed and approved to release a liferaft or EPIRB in the event of a ship sinking and which have not been manually launched/ deployed.

It has come to the attention of the MCA that time expired CM Hammar H20 HRUs have been recycled by unauthorised economic operators and re-sold as new, genuine units.

In consultation with CM Hammar, a H20 HRU should be disposed of at the end of its service life which is 2 years. By putting a H20 HRU back into service, the unit may not operate and the release of either a liferaft or EPIRB in the event of a ship sinking is not guaranteed. This poses a serious risk to safety.

The HRUs highlighted to the MCA have had their genuine labels removed and substandard labels affixed. These labels were observed to erode away within a short time from installation.

Advice to Industry

In order to ensure the safety of ships and the persons on board, CM Hammar recommends that H20 HRUs are procured from authorised distributors or service agents of liferafts to ensure genuine units are used. A list of authorised distributors can be seen on the CM Hammar website here: <http://www.cmhammar.com/distributors/h20-for-liferafts/>

CM Hammar have observed this practice in the past few years and issued a product safety alert to highlight the characteristics of genuine H20 units. Additionally, CM Hammar incorporated new product safety features to further prevent this practice.

In order to ensure H20 HRU products are genuine, the following should be observed:

- On the top of the unit there should be a serial number on the left hand side and for units manufactured after 24.02.2009 a holographic “holospot” on the right hand side.
- The holospot should shimmer a rainbow colour in direct light
- The holospot should contain a unique five character alphanumeric number that is different on each unit
- That all products are procured with the Hammar multilingual product manual and a raft label (for liferaft products) or Hammar marking instruction (for EPIRB products).

Where concerns are raised regarding the authenticity of a product, CM Hammar should be contacted directly to verify the serial and holospot numbers.