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# Canadian Coast Guard safety bulletin



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## Posting instructions:

This notice is to be posted in a place accessible to all employees for a period of 6 months.

**CCGSB 03-2022**

## Safety procedures for inflating small craft sponsons

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### Target audience

All Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) seagoing personnel, small craft operators and maintenance personnel.

### Purpose

This Canadian Coast Guard safety bulletin is to inform CCG seagoing personnel, fast rescue craft and small craft operators of the safety procedures when inflating the craft sponsons to prevent injuries and damage due to overinflation and rupture of the sponson.

### Background

A near miss occurred onboard a CCG vessel when a sponson of a small craft without an independent pressure relief valve ruptured while being inflated with the vessel's compressed air system. It was determined that the routine procedure used to inflate the sponson was not done according to the manufacturer's recommendations and that improper inflating equipment was used. Due to the routine nature of the task, no risk assessment was conducted or procedures developed, and the manufacturers operating manual was not available. This resulted in the overinflation of the small craft's sponson causing the explosive rupture, damaging the craft and could have resulted in severe personal injury.

### Corrective measures

The manufacturer's instructions for inflating small craft sponsons must be available and followed at all times. This includes using only a foot pump that is designed for the craft's rated air pressure to inflate the sponson. Shipboard compressed air systems should not be used at any time to inflate a small craft sponson. The site specific work instructions (SSWIs) for small craft operations will be reviewed to ensure that these corrective measures are included.

### Additional consideration

This incident is a good example of the use of near miss reporting to identify risks, reduce injuries and to affect change within the Safety Management System (SMS). The pre-job safety assessment (PJSA) is an important tool that can help in reducing the risks during normal operations.

**Enquiries**

Enquiries regarding this safety bulletin should be directed to:

Director, Safety Management  
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