**Self check your inflatable lifejackets**

Inflatable lifejackets are certainly very convenient but remember to be diligent with your checks and undertake regular servicing. Self checking a lifejacket can be done at any time to ensure the jacket is functioning properly.

**STEP 1**
Check for visible signs of wear and damage. Ensure all fastenings and buckles are in good working order.

**STEP 2**
Following the manufacturer’s instructions, reveal the inflation system and oral inflation tube. Inflate the bladder using the oral tube and leave overnight in a room with a constant temperature. If the bladder loses pressure, immediately take the jacket to an accredited service agent for further tests. Do not attempt to repair the jacket yourself.

**STEP 3**
Use the cap attached to the oral inflation tube to deflate the bladder. Invert the cap and press down on the valve at the top of the oral tube. Do not insert other objects into top of tube as they may damage the valve. Roll or press jacket to deflate fully.

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**Buying a Lifejacket**

Before you buy, try the lifejacket on in the shop. Choose the appropriate weight and size range. It should be snug without confining or riding up. Ensure you can put it on quickly, with minimal instruction.

Check one that is made in bright colours and reflective tape which will assist rescuers to find you at night.

**Size and fit**

For infants, because of the varying weight distribution of babies it is difficult to put flotation in the right places. Children less than about a year old cannot be adequately catered for and should not be taken boating.

For older children and adults, there are three main things to look for:

- The weight range on the lifejacket’s label agrees with the person’s weight;
- The lifejacket is a snug fit (loose lifejackets work poorly); and
- The lifejacket is comfortable to wear.

**Maintaining Lifejackets**

Skippers should check the condition of their lifejackets annually or as recommended by the manufacturer.

- Check for tears that could let water enter the lifejacket and rot the buoyant material.
- Check the straps are in good condition and not frayed.
- Rinse with fresh water if it gets wet during use, dry prior to storage.

**Inflatable Lifejackets**

Inflatable lifejackets are becoming increasingly popular. These CO2 inflated garments are lighter and less cumbersome than conventional foam lifejackets and are quite versatile - they’re even made as wet weather jackets and windproof vests.

Care should be taken when purchasing an inflatable jacket to ensure that it conforms with Australian Standards: AS 4758 – Level 100 (or higher), AS 1512 or ISO 12402. This will be clearly marked on the lifejacket.

You should be aware of the added maintenance requirements that come with this style of jacket and carry out self checks regularly (see opposite). Crew and passengers should be briefed on their operation.

**Inflatable lifejacket maintenance**

It is important that inflatable lifejackets are serviced regularly. You should follow the manufacturer’s instructions or, if the manufacturer doesn’t specify, you should have your lifejacket serviced at least every 12 months. This will ensure it is in good working order.

**Inflatable lifejackets**

Inflatable lifejackets are certainly very convenient but remember to be diligent with your checks and undertake regular servicing. Self checking a lifejacket can be done at any time to ensure the jacket is functioning properly.
Types of lifejackets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifejacket</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>PFD</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AS 4758</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>– Level 275 or</td>
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<td>– Level 150 or</td>
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<td>– Level 100 or</td>
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<td>ISO 12402 or</td>
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<td>AS 1512</td>
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</table>

Level 100 and higher lifejackets provide a high level of buoyancy and are:
- Approved for use in unprotected waters.
- Fitted with head and neck support.
- Designed to keep you in a face up floating position.
- Manufactured using high-visibility colours.
- Suitable for offshore and general boating in all waters.

Type 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifejacket</th>
<th>Level</th>
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<th>Standard</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AS 4758</td>
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<td>– Level 50 or</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>ISO 12402 or</td>
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<td>AS 1499</td>
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</table>

Level 50 lifejackets have a lower level of buoyancy than the Level 100 and higher lifejackets and are:
- Not approved for general use in unprotected waters.
- Not fitted with head and neck support.
- Not designed to keep you in a face up floating position.
- Manufactured using high-visibility colours.
- Normally used for sailing, kayaking, canoeing, wind surfing and on personal water craft.

Type 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifejacket</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>PFD</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AS 4758</td>
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<td>– Level 50S or</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>ISO 12402 or</td>
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<td>AS 2260</td>
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Level 50S lifejackets have similar buoyancy to the Level 50 lifejackets and are:
- Not approved for general use in unprotected waters.
- Not fitted with head and neck support.
- Not designed to keep you in a face up floating position.
- Not manufactured using high-visibility colours.
- Favourite of waterskiers, wakeboarders, kayakers and canoeists where comfort and style are important.
- Available as a built in garment (eg water skiing wet suit).

The rules

A lifejacket must be carried for each person (over the age of 12 months) on board a recreational vessel when operating in unprotected waters.

Unprotected waters are WA’s navigable waters that are not contained:
- in a lake;
- in a river;
- in an estuary; or
- by any breakwater.

Note: This does not include the waters of Cambridge Gulf or Lake Argyle.

Lifejackets for use in unprotected waters

Lifejackets approved for general use in unprotected waters bear the standard or stamp:
- AS 4758 – Level 100 (or higher);
- ISO 12402;
- AS 1512; or
- SOLAS.

Each lifejacket must suit the weight of the person, be maintained in a good condition and easily accessible.

When to wear a lifejacket

You will enhance your safety if you wear a lifejacket at all times, or at least:
- at the first sign of bad weather;
- between sunset and sunrise or during restricted visibility;
- when operating in unfamiliar waters;
- when operating with a following sea;
- when boating alone (this is especially recommended);
- at all times on children under 10 years;
- if you are a poor swimmer; or
- on medication that may affect your balance.

Contact details

Department of Transport
Email: marine.safety@transport.wa.gov.au
Website: www.transport.wa.gov.au/marine
Marine Safety Hotline: 13 11 56

When operating within 400m of the shore, paddlecraft, sailboards and kitesurfers.

For further information go to www.transport.wa.gov.au/lifejackets or scan the QR code.

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