



The International Marine
Contractors Association

Marking of Hyperbaric Rescue Systems Designed to Float in Water



The International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA) is the international trade association representing offshore, marine and underwater engineering companies.

IMCA promotes improvements in quality, health, safety, environmental and technical standards through the publication of information notes, codes of practice and by other appropriate means.

Members are self-regulating through the adoption of IMCA guidelines as appropriate. They commit to act as responsible members by following relevant guidelines and being willing to be audited against compliance with them by their clients.

There are two core committees that relate to all members:

- ◆ Safety, Environment & Legislation
- ◆ Training, Certification & Personnel Competence

The Association is organised through four distinct divisions, each covering a specific area of members' interests: Diving, Marine, Offshore Survey, Remote Systems & ROV.

There are also four regional sections which facilitate work on issues affecting members in their local geographic area – Americas Deepwater, Asia-Pacific, Europe & Africa and Middle East & India.

IMCA D 027

This document supersedes AODC 017, which is now withdrawn.

www.imca-int.com/diving

The information contained herein is given for guidance only and endeavours to reflect best industry practice. For the avoidance of doubt no legal liability shall attach to any guidance and/or recommendation and/or statement herein contained.

The Marking of Hyperbaric Rescue Systems Designed to Float in Water

In 1984, AODC developed guidance on the colour and marking of these systems, in order to avoid confusion on the part of rescuers as to exactly what they have found in the water. This note updates the guidance given in AODC 017 and is in line with the requirements of IMO Resolution A.692(17).

1 Types

Most systems fall into one of three categories:

- i) **Type 1** is a pressure vessel which contains the divers, with another compartment which accommodates a supervisor and the crew. It is usually self-propelled and is either mounted inside a conventional lifeboat hull or resembles a conventional lifeboat;
- ii) **Type 2** is a pressure vessel which contains the divers mounted inside a protective buffer frame. This type may not be self-propelled and can vary substantially in its external appearance;
- iii) **Type 3** is a diving bell. This may be used on some small diving operations for hyperbaric rescue purposes.

2 Colour

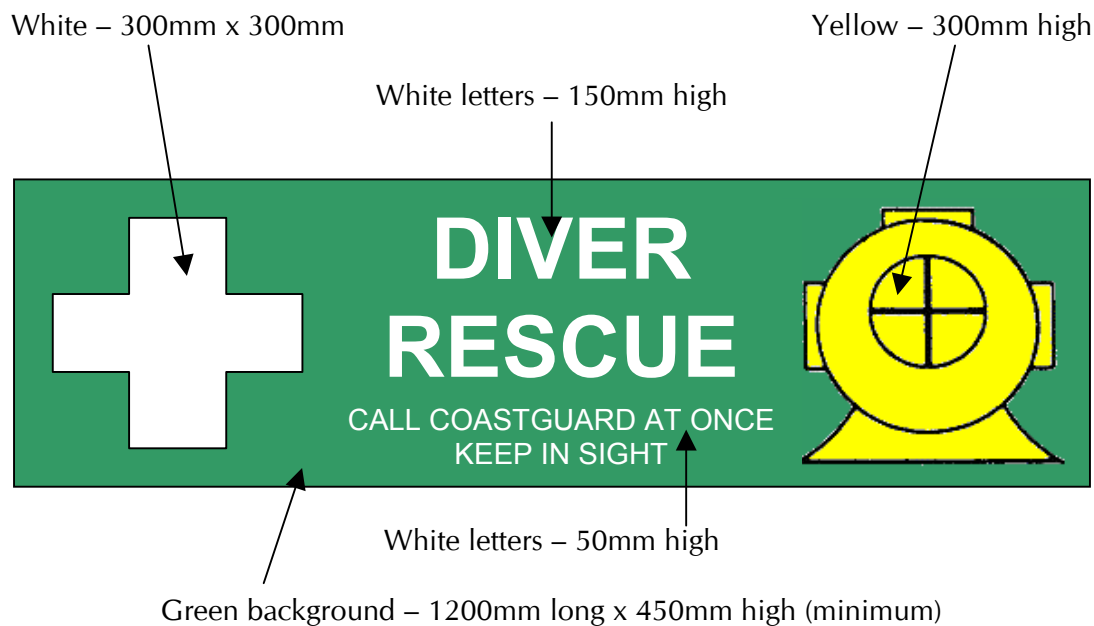
It is recommended that all hyperbaric rescue systems are coloured International Distress Orange over the major portion of their visible surface when floating. They should also be fitted with patches of reflective material to assist their location at night.

3 Towing Harness

Not all types of rescue system will be fitted with towing harnesses or lines. However, if they are fitted, then they should be lightly clipped or tied to the vessel, such that the line will not be easily dislodged, but so that it can be immediately pulled free from the clips if any genuine effort is made to take the vessel under tow. The towing eye must be clearly visible and immediately accessible on the top of the vessel.

4 Marking Sign

Each system should be marked with three identical signs, as shown below. One should be on the top of the system, mounted horizontally, and the other two on opposite sides mounted as near vertical as possible. All three signs should be visible when the rescue system is floating in water.



5 Additional Information

In addition to the signs, each rescue system should be clearly marked in two separate places, to be visible when floating, with the following information:

- i) Weight in air;
- ii) Safe lifting points or positions;
- iii) Vessel or installation name.

6 Warning Information

Each system should be marked in two separate locations, so as to be visible while the system is floating in water, with the following information:

UNLESS SPECIALISED DIVING ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE:

DO NOT touch any valves or other controls

DO NOT take in tow unless in imminent danger

DO NOT try to get the occupants out

DO NOT connect any gas, air, water or other supplies

DO NOT attempt to give food, drinks or medical supplies to the occupants

DO NOT open any hatches

7 Reminders

A number of other safety considerations are worthy of mention:

- ◆ All external connection points for supplies must be clearly labelled as to their purpose;
- ◆ Hyperbaric rescue systems should be fitted with active means of attracting rescuers as applicable for each individual case. Such devices may include flashing lights, radio beacons and radar reflectors.

8 Note on Type 3 Rescue Systems

It is recognised that Type 3 rescue systems, i.e. diving bells, cannot be marked as recommended due to their small size. In such cases, the maximum marking possible should be applied. This will normally be done by means of a 'clip-on' or 'lash-on' sign or signs if the bell is actually to be used for hyperbaric evacuation.