

Safety Bulletin 01 of 2019

Small Craft - Throw Bag Rescue Line Failures

This Safety Bulletin is issued following the failure of a throw bag rescue line, at a join in the line, during a recovery exercise in the UK. As a result, a Bulletin and Incident report have been issued by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB). It is strongly recommended that all local users of such equipment carry out the checks contained in the Bulletin. Links to the Bulletin and the full MAIB report are below.

MAIB Report 2/2019

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c5046e540f0b62545d8c9d0/MAIBInvReport2_2019.pdf;

MAIB Safety Bulletin 2/2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5b10fe40e5274a18fe26653a/SB2_2018.pdf;



RIBER, and several other suppliers of throw bag rescue lines, import the complete manufactured product pre-branded with their company's logo. The foreign suppliers identified so far assemble the throw bags using components from further suppliers. As the rope used for rescue lines in throw bags is not classified as lifesaving or safety equipment, there is no requirement for it to conform to any recognised safety or quality standards.

SAFETY LESSONS: Many commercial craft and recreational vessels carry throw bag rescue lines as part of their safety equipment. It is likely that many of these throw bags will lie dormant in a cupboard or locker until they are required to be deployed in an emergency. To ensure that throw bag rescue lines are fit for purpose they should be opened and checked as follows:



- The entire length of the rescue line should be examined for joins or other discontinuities. This can best be done by feeling along the length of the line with bare hands to identify rough patches or lumps.
- Any knots, splices or other methods of securing the ends of the line to handles, quoits or other parts of the equipment should also be checked for integrity.
- The throw bag should be inspected and tried at regular intervals and repacked according to the manufacturer's instructions, as otherwise the line may not deploy freely from the bag when required.

Any throw bag rescue lines found to have joins or discontinuities should be removed from service and the original manufacturer /supplier informed.

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