OSR 5.01 Lifejacket

To define the purpose of Crotch/Thigh Straps

A submission from the Chairman of the OSR Committee on behalf of RORC

Purpose or Objective

To make it clear that the purpose of Crotch/Thigh Straps is to hold the bladder down and the importance of correctly adjusted lifejackets.

Proposal

To amend OSR 5.01 – Lifejacket as follows:

5.01 Lifejacket

5.01.1 Each crew member shall have a lifejacket as follows:-

a) in accordance with ISO 12402 – 3 (Level 150) or equivalent, including EN396 or UL 1180

(ii) Lifejackets manufactured after 1 January 2012 shall be in accordance with ISO 12402-3 (Level 150) and shall be fitted with:-

- An emergency light in accordance with either ISO 12402-8 or SOLAS LSA code 2.2.3
- A spray hood in accordance with ISO 12402-8.
- A full deck safety harness in accordance with ISO 12401 (ISO 1095) including crotch or thigh strap (holding down device) as specified in ISO 12401 (ISO 1095).

Notes: ISO 12402 requires Level 150 lifejackets to be fitted with a mandatory whistle and retro-reflective material. Also, when fitted with a safety harness, ISO 12402 requires that this shall be the full safety harness in accordance with ISO 12401. Any equivalent lifejacket shall have equal requirements.

Persons of larger than average build are generally more buoyant than those of average build and so do not require a lifejacket with greater levels of flotation. Wearing a Level 275 lifejacket may hamper entry into liferafts.

b) fitted with either crotch strap(s) / thigh straps or full safety harness in accordance with ISO 12401,

- Crotch straps or thigh straps together with related fittings and fixtures should be strong enough to lift the wearer from the water. Note: The function of lifejacket crotch/thigh straps is to hold the bladder down. A crew member before a race should adjust a lifejacket to fit then retain that lifejacket for the duration of the race. Correct adjustment is fundamental to the lifejacket functioning correctly.

c) Fitted with a lifejacket light in accordance with SOLAS LSA code 2.2.3 (white, >0.75 candelas, >8 hours),

d) if inflatable have a compressed gas inflation system,

e) if inflatable, regularly test for gas retention,

f) Compatible with the wearer’s safety harness,

g) Clearly marked with the yacht’s or wearer’s name,

h) Fitted with a splashguard / sprayhood in accordance with ISO 12402 – 8,

i) Fitted with a PLB unit (as with other types of EPIRB, should be properly registered with the appropriate authority),

It is strongly recommended that a lifejacket has:

j) A splashguard / sprayhood See ISO 12402 – 8,
Current Position

As Above

Reason

1. The current wording of OSR 5.01.1b) is inappropriate for lifejackets where the function is to hold the bladder down. Correct adjustment of a lifejacket will prevent it from coming off if the person is lifted by the lifejacket.

   Note: This submission is tendered in the light of recommendations made by the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch following an incident when the Person in Charge went overboard and lost his life. His lifejacket came off while the body was being recovered.