



CYLINDER TESTING

JACK MORRISON

SCOTSAC HAS had a couple of recent reports that divers have been refused air fills because their cylinders had not been tested at an approved test station. Understandably those refused were annoyed, however the dive centre involved did lend them cylinders for their dives as they were diving from their boat.

So what is the position? From July 1, 2006, the HSE requirement for a 'competent person' to carry out cylinder inspection and testing was removed and replaced with the requirement for such testing to be carried out by an accredited body/person. This is to comply with the Carriage of Dangerous Goods and use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2004. This accreditation must be carried out to the satisfaction of United Kingdom Accreditation Services which is the only accreditation body that government (DfT and HSE) is prepared to recognise. UKAS appointed IDEST/ASSET to grant accredita-

tion, below is a list of IDEST approved test facilities in Scotland.

So any cylinders due for test after July 2006 must be tested at one of these test stations where technicians at these stations have a unique number meaning that if your cylinder has not been properly stamped then any air station can refuse to fill them.

Becoming accredited is an expensive business as purchasing all the necessary equipment can cost £2,000-£3,000 so for the local dive shop it is not cost effective. However many are still offering the service to their customers and are using one of the approved stations, which is perhaps why it may be costing a bit more to have your cylinder tested.

This is a brief summary of the position, which I have deliberately kept simple. If you want to know more go to: www.sita.org.uk. Meanwhile let me remind you that the consequences of not complying with the law may adversely affect your insurance if you are unfortu-

nate enough to have an accident either diving or more likely in your car. I have also included separately advice we received from HSE and the British Diving Safety Group on carrying cylinders in a car.

SCOTS SAFE TESTING LTD

17 Woodlands Drive, Kirkhall Industrial Estate, Dyce, Aberdeen AB2 0ES

SABRE SAFETY LTD

Sabre House, Cupar Trading Estate, Cupar, Fife KY15 4SX

PATERSON (SAFETY AIR SYSTEMS) LTD

The Green, Twechar, Kilsyth, Glasgow G65 9QQ

LOCH FINE DIVE CHARTERS

The Boat Yard, Pier Road, Tarbert, Argyle PA29 6UF

EDINBURGH DIVING CENTRE

1 Watson Crescent, Edinburgh EH11 1HD

C&C MARINE SERVICES

Largs Yacht Haven, Irvine Road, Largs KA30 8EZ

HSE ADVICE TO BRITISH DIVING SAFETY GROUP MEMBERS ON CARRIAGE OF SCUBA CYLINDERS

THE CARRIAGE of SCUBA cylinders (or any breathing apparatus cylinders) by private individuals for personal use is exempt from the provisions of the Carriage of Dangerous Goods legislation provided that measures have been taken to prevent any leakage of contents in normal conditions of carriage.

If cylinders are to be carried by someone who is at work, there is a requirement to carry at least one 2kg dry powder fire extinguisher in the vehicle. The rest of the regulations do not apply as long as the combined capacity of the cylinders is 1000 litres or less (which would allow the carriage of up to 83 twelve litre cylinders).

Cylinders must be labelled if they are to be used or filled at work. The labels must show, in clearly legible and durable characters, the UN number and the proper shipping name of the gas or mixture of gases. Hazard labels should also be attached to the cylinder.

HSE RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING LABEL FORMATS ARE USED

UN 1002 Air, Compressed		UN 1002 Air, Compressed
UN 1072 Oxygen, Compressed		UN 1072 Oxygen, Compressed
UN 3156 Compressed Gas Oxidizing N.O.S. (Nitrox/Trimix/Heliox)		Mixture of: ___ % Oxygen ___ % Nitrogen ___ % Helium
		M.O.D:

Note – If the Trimix/Heliox has an Oxygen content of 21% or less, then the label needs to show UN No 1956 - 'Compressed Gas N.O.S.' The yellow hazard diamond (oxidizing gas) would not be required.