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Inflatables and changes to HSG 175

In the recently published version of HSG 175 on table 2 in the column for Design Review for inflatables, it says No (assessment of conformity to BS EN 14960: 2013).

It is the opinion of NAFLIC that this is confusing because in undertaking a conformity to a standard, by default, it becomes a design review. In light of this and the view that the HSE is taking with regard to inflatables, IBs are offered the following advice.

Any IB undertaking an annual inspection of an inflatable device should ascertain from the controller that the device is designed in accordance with BS EN 14960. It is understood that this can be achieved by either a certificate of conformity issued by the device manufacturer or an assessment of conformity report issued by a competent person. If neither of these is available then the IB will not be able to issue a DOC. The controller should be informed and asked to have a competent person undertake a full and complete assessment of conformity of the device to BS EN 14960.

IBs requested to undertake an assessment of conformity to design should be aware that this is outside of the scope of an annual inspection. There is currently no advice from ADIPS with respect to what competency level is required of an IB in order to allow them to undertake an assessment of conformity for inflatables. The assessment of conformity needs to cover all aspects of the design of the device and the HSE is placing particular emphasis on the number of tie down points. There is a simple formula at the end of BS EN 14960 based on a basic wind speed, but it is noted that there are many different shapes of these types of device and this simple formula may not cover all variations, so a conservative approach should be taken.

Note for Controllers: you should ensure that you have either a certificate of conformity or a conformity assessment report before requesting an annual inspection.

If a certificate of conformity or a conformity report is available then the IB will need to check in either the O&M manual or the conformity report for the correct number and location on the device of the tie down points. As part of the annual inspection the HSE expects that the IB will not only check the condition of the tie down points but also check that the correct number are in place. It is the view of NAFLIC that checking the correct number of tie down points is strictly outside the scope of the annual inspection. However, if the location and number of tie down points is available then the IB should record where the information has come from, i.e. O&M or Assessment of Conformity report, and note that the number and positions match those given.