



Maritime &
Coastguard
Agency

Guidance

Safety Bulletin 3: Portable fuel tanks

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Summary of issue

It has been brought to the MCA's attention that there have been instances of portable fuel tanks fitted on board rescue boats that have failed in their operation.

Failures have included the detachment of the fuel pick up device from the fuel pipe, inside the fuel tank caused by failure of the relevant adhesive.

Actions to take

There are a variety of considerations ship operators should consider to ensure the safe operation of such fuel tanks.

Service

Portable fuel tanks, like the engine they provide fuel to, are a serviceable item and should be serviced with the engine in accordance with the relevant manufacturer's guidelines at a service agent recognised by the manufacturer.

Inspect

Portable tanks should be visually inspected for signs of wear and tear. Where a tank shows signs of deterioration it should not be used and should be submitted for service.

Fuel

The quality of fuel should be confirmed as compatible with the tank and engine before use. Specific attention should be drawn to the ethanol content of fuel. This may be challenging when procuring fuel in remote regions outside the EU. Most manufacturers offer a test kit and the specific manufacturer should be contacted.

Age

Where a portable fuel tank has been manufactured with a maximum service life, this should be confirmed by the markings on the tank and should not be used after its expiry.

Follow

Manufacturers' care, stowage and operating instructions at all times.

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