



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

S: 17 March 2006

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CECW-CO/CESO

**MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS, AND
DISTRICT COMMANDS, CHIEFS, CONSTRUCTION-OPERATIONS DIVISION**

SUBJECT: Request for Participation, Auto-Inflatable Personal Flotation Device Field Test

1. I have approved an optional one-season field test of auto-inflatable personal flotation devices (PFDs) at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Water Resources Development Projects. This decision is based on a series of reliability tests conducted by the Corps Safety and Operations offices over a five-year period. Participation will require a minimum number of six team members per district. MSC commands that elect to participate in the test should forward their nomination request to HQUSACE National Operations Center for Water Safety, NLT 17 March 2006. The nomination should include the name of the district, the district's POC and the names, titles, and locations of all the individuals who will be participating in the test.
2. The field test will begin on or around 1 April and will conclude on 30 September 2006. The purpose of the test will be to further study the practical use of three specifically approved auto-inflatable models. These devices, Stearns Model #1470, Mustang Models #MD3087 and #MD3183, have met safety reliability tests, but require practical testing before final approval for Corps-wide use is provided. Only these three specified auto-inflatable PFDs named above are authorized for this test. Costs for purchasing and maintenance of the test PFDs will be borne locally. All testing will be conducted in accordance with the enclosed Auto-inflatable Personal Flotation Device Field Test Policy Requirements and Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOP). Further guidance will be provided directly to participating districts and projects.
3. A detailed Position Hazard Analysis for each employee using an auto-inflatable vest and associated project Activity Hazard Analysis must be prepared by each field office participating in the field test. Personnel approved to participate in the field test must meet the criteria set in the SOP manual. Test participants will be selected from within the Operations Business Program, including natural resources management, lock and dam, powerhouse, floating plant, and marine construction personnel.
4. Approval of this test does not alter current standards of EM 385-1-1, Safety and Health Requirements Manual. Only those Corps employees specifically identified for participation in the field test will be authorized to wear the subject auto-inflatable devices until further approval.
5. After the test period, participants will be asked to provide documentation of performance, wear and maintenance. Report criteria and samples will be provided to those districts

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participating, and will include information such as wear rate, device maintenance requirements/costs, deployments, and comments related to comfort/fit.

6. At the conclusion of the test, the results will be evaluated and presented to the Director of Civil Works for possible Corps-wide consideration and decision.

7. POC for this action is Ms. Lynda Nutt, Program Manager, National Operations Center for Water Safety, (208) 773-8442.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


for DON T. RILEY
Major General, USA
Director of Civil Works

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