

MK-1 Tip 002-DELETED (Aug 2012)
Some Frequently Asked Questions about MK-1

Following are some frequently asked questions about the MK-1 life preserver (flight deck float coat) concerning the compatibility of the old MK-1 vs. the new Stearns MK-1.

- [Over inflation of cylinders](#)
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Q: Will there be over inflation of MK-1 life preserver bladder with the differences in the two types CO₂ cylinders currently being used between the Old MK-1 and the new Stearns MK-1 Life Preserver?

A: See message [270558Z SEP 01](#), which authorizes the interchanging of the CO₂ cylinders. In addition, the only time the bladder could be over inflated is when the STEARNS bladder is installed with a 29 gram CO₂ cylinder. NAVSEA tested this configuration before authorization was given and found it not to be a concern. The STEARNS bladder is designed for a certain pressure over the normal pressure of 24 grams and the old CO₂ cylinder falls below this limit.

Q: Can you bend the Oral Inflation Tube on the new STEARNS MK-1 bladder in order to fit into the older MK-1 float coat?

A: Yes, but realizing that the STEARNS oral inflation tube is more rigid and that if the oral inflation tube is brought all the way through the hole in the float coat and then put through the loop, it would require the bending of the tube to get it in the securing loop. If this is the way you are currently installing it, recommend an alternative method—bend the upper part of the float coat so that the loop for the oral inflation tube is almost directly over the oral inflation tube hole in the float coat so that you can put the oral inflation tube through the float coat hole and the loop at the same time as a one step process. This should alleviate the bending of the tube, this way the person is bending the vest vice the tube.

Q: Could the old MK-1 bladder and the new STEARNS MK-1 bladder be

interchangeable?

A: Yes, both types of MK-1 bladder can be interchangeable between the float coat, however, it is recommended to place the STEARNS MK-1 bladder with the STEARNS MK-1 float coat and the old MK-1 bladder with the old MK-1 float coat. The old MK-1 bladder (secured to the inside of the left side of the vest with Velcro) and the new STEARNS MK-1 bladder (secured to the inside of the vest with snaps on each side) are manufactured with a way of securing them in place within the float coat.

Q: How can you stop the riding up of MK-1 bladder inside the neck area of float coat?

A: First check that your bladder is secured in the float coat. This office cannot envision how the STEARNS MK-1 bladder can ride up all the way into the neck area if the bladder is correctly installed. This is due to the fact that the STEARNS MK-1 bladder is wide at the bottom and narrow in the neck area. The way the bladder was designed it is considered to be difficult to get the bladder to ride up into the neck area even without being secured to the float coat.

Q: Can velcro patch be "glue" on the new STEARNS MK-1 bladder when installing it in the old MK-1 float coat?

A: Yes, you can put a velcro patch on the new STEARNS MK-1 bladder; however, the recommendation is not gluing it on. Per NSTM 077, the adhesive may not work on the bladder and it also may damage it. Recommend using a velcro patch that has a self adhesive backing.

Q: Can the different styles of bladders and the different styles of float coats be interchangeable (old MIL-SPEC vs. STEARNS)?

A: The best situation is to have the STEARNS bladder only in the STEARNS float coat and the old MIL-SPEC bladder in the old MIL-SPEC float coat. However, for the following reasons authorization was given to the interchangeability of the bladders and the float coats:

1. All configurations of float coats and bladders provides sufficient floatation.
2. The new STEARNS bladder provides better floatation characteristics than the old bladder and is constructed better. The new STEARNS bladder meets all Coast Guard requirements.
3. The old bladder manufacturer could not keep up with demand and there was a severe backlog of orders. Introduction of the new STEARNS bladder as a way to meet backorder problem.

- ~~4. Did not want to put a financial burden on the Fleet by making them get rid of the old float coats (still usable ones) because of a new bladder.~~

~~Q: How can you prevent the oral inflator cap from being a FOD hazard?~~

~~The oral inflation cap can only be a FOD hazard when the STEARNS bladder is in the existing MK 1 vest. The STEARNS MK 1 vest has a flap that covers the oral inflation tube. Once existing vests are no longer used, the risk of the FOD hazard goes away. In the interim, recommend using additional methods of securing the oral inflation tube cap to the tube (e.g. duct taping the stem to the tube).~~

~~Q: Will there be more changes to the float coat coming down the pipe?~~

~~A: Yes, there will always be improvements especially to a life saving piece of equipment. Currently, these following changes will be made in the near future:~~

- ~~1. There will be securing strap for the CO₂ cylinder added on the new STEARNS float coat just like is is on the old float coat.~~
- ~~2. The flap on the back of the float coat will be secured so it does not cause a snag hazard.~~