



Technical Bulletin 3

Guidance Notes For Labelling And Marking Requirements For PIPA Inspectors

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Date	July 2022

Guidance notes for labelling and marking requirements for PIPA inspectors

This guidance note has been issued following a number of complaints from operators regarding the application of labelling by PIPA inspectors.

This document gives guidance on PIPA's interpretation of the BS/EN 14960 standard and clarification of where and how to mark the unit if required. It also references where to find the relevant guidance within the standard should inspectors be asked for this by their customer.

Where possible markings should be added to the existing labels. The addition of markings by means of permanent marker pen or similar outside of existing labels should be kept to a minimum and when required be applied with care and with the approval and understanding of the operator.

In the absence of a label and/or any other relevant markings then an inspector should consider advising the operator that suitable labelling would have to be completed before a PIPA inspection can be completed and this may mean the addition of suitable labels by stitching or adhesive.

We are updating the PIPA guidance on blower tubes to suggest that the tag number is written on the inside of the tube. This maintains the aesthetic of the unit and makes it less likely that the marking will be intentionally removed in the event of a theft.

Guidance notes for labelling and making requirements for PIPA inspectors

BS/EN 14960 – 1 States: (Numbers and letters have been added to aid guidance)

Each inflatable shall be legibly and permanently marked with, at least the following;

1. Type and size of blower required
2. Maximum height of user
3. Maximum number of users
4. Unique identifying number (s)

5. Year of Manufacture
6. Name and address of one of either the supplier, manufacturer, importer or authorised representative
7. Name and number of this European standard

Connection tube (s) shall be marked so as not to be confused with any other tube (s), e.g. inspection tubes, deflation tubes.

These markings shall be clearly visible when the equipment is in use.

Each blower shall be legibly and permanently marked with, at least the following;

- a. Type and size
- b. Unique identifying number
- c. Year of manufacture
- d. Name and address of the supplier/manufacturer
- e. Number and date of this European standard

These marking shall be clearly visible when the equipment is in use.

The PIPA scheme rules states;

22.3 – An inspector should write the tag number on the blower tube of the inflatable in case it gets lost, damaged or stolen.

Guidance for inspectors on compliance with BS/EN 14960 marking requirements

1 –

It is the duty of the manufacturer to assign the type and size of blower required and state this on the product label, if present then the inspector should not alter this. If this information is not present, then the inspector should only indicate a blower size and type if they are competent to do so.

This information should be applied to the manufacturers label. Some manufacturers and inspectors add this information to the inlet tube (s). This is not a requirement for compliance and should only be completed with the approval of the operator and where possible on a suitable label.

2-

Maximum height (s) of users should be stated by the manufacture and indicated on the product label. If no indication is given, then an inspector should only assign user heights if they are competent to do so.

Inspectors should not adjust the manufacturers recommendations without good reason and should consider consulting the manufacturer or PIPA before doing so.

Markings should, where possible be placed onto the manufacturers label.

3-

Maximum number (s) of users should be stated by the manufacturer and indicated on the product label. If no indication is given, then an inspector should only assign user numbers if they are competent to do so. Inspectors should not adjust the manufacturers recommendations without good reason and should consider consulting the manufacturer or PIPA before doing so.

Markings should be placed onto the manufacturers label.

Guidance on calculating user numbers is intended but not available yet.

4-

The manufacturer should have added a unique identifying number onto the product label. If this is not stated then an inspector may attempt to ascertain this information from the manufacturer, or possibly a previous inspection report. If this is not possible then note this on your test report.

Once tagged the PIPA number can become the unique identifying number.

5-

The manufacturer should have added a date, at least a year of manufacture to the product label, if this is not stated then an inspector may attempt to ascertain this information from the manufacturer or possibly a previous inspection report. If this is not possible, then note on your test report but do not add a date that may be incorrect.

6-

All required information relating to the inflatable should be found on the manufacturers label. In the unlikely event that this is missing, and the information cannot be found, then a standard PIPA inspection can still be completed, however all the other markings will still need to be present and a new label may have to be fitted to the inflatable.

7-

If compliance with the European standard is not stated on a label, then this could be ascertained from the manufacturer/importer.

Absence of this will call into question the suitability of materials used in the construction. While there is guidance with regard to flame retardance, there are no means to ascertain fabric strength on site and this will rely on the inspectors judgement.

The presence of a PIPA tag could be assumed to indicate compliance; however, inspectors are advised to make their own enquiries.

Connection tubes

BS/EN 14960 only requires that connection tubes should be marked to identify their purpose. If this has not been completed by the manufacturer, the inspector should consult with the operator before marking tubes, however the operator should be informed that without the tubes being marked, the unit cannot receive a tag or remain indicated as compliant by PIPA.

It is always best to install a label if possible, however with the owners consent and suitable care a permanent marker will suffice.

Blower Labelling

Information relevant to the blower should be present on the manufacturers label. If the label is damaged or missing the inspector could choose to reject the blower and request an alternative blower.

If the inspector feels confident that the blower is suitable then it can be inspected, tested and if passed marked with a suitable unique identifying number to connect it with the inspection report, this could be the relevant PIPA tag number.

Air Pressure

While not explicitly required within BS/EN 14960 many manufacturers do state the required minimum air pressure on their labels.

If this is not present then an inspector is encouraged to add this information, to the label if possible. If there is no space then it could be added, (with the agreement of the operator) close to the label or possibly to the inlet tube.

The PIPA scheme rule 22.3

It is recommended that the PIPA tag number is marked onto the inside of the inflation tube by means of a permanent marker pen or similar means. This is intended as an aid to identifying the unit should the tag be lost or illegible, however lost or illegible tags would still have to be replaced for completion of a PIPA inspection.

General Notes

Where possible markings should be added to the existing labels. The addition of markings by means of permanent marker pen or similar outside of existing labels should be kept to a minimum, and when required be applied with care and with the approval and understanding of the operator.

In the absence of a label and/or any other relevant markings, the inspector should consider advising the operator that suitable labelling would have to be completed before a PIPA inspection can be completed. This may mean the addition of suitable labels by stitching or adhesive.

Defining competence

HSE defines competence as the combination of training, skills, experience, and knowledge that a person has and their ability to apply them to perform a task safely.

If you hold the necessary competence to carry out the inspection of such devices, then there is no legal impediment to prevent you carrying out the inspection.

However, you should consider carefully whether you hold the requisite training, skills, experience, and knowledge as in the event of an incident or an intervention by a Regulatory body, you are likely to be required to demonstrate and provide evidence of your stated competence.