

Life Jackets and PFDs It's the Law

The goal of the Newfoundland and Labrador Fish Harvesting Safety Association (NL-FHSA) is to help harvesters stay safe at sea so they can return home to their families and the next fishing season. This article delves into the specifics of life jacket versus personal flotation device (PFD) use on fishing vessels.

Under Transport Canada and the provincial *Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations*, there are specific requirements regarding PFD use.

- When there is a possibility of a risk of drowning, the fishing vessel owner is required to ensure that a life jacket or PFD is worn.
- Transport Canada-approved life jackets are required for each person on board a vessel over 12m in length operating beyond 25nm from shore. If a fishing vessel owner operates a vessel under 12m (under 40') in length and within 25nm from shore and decides not to carry life jackets on board, PFDs are acceptable, but they must also have a buoyancy equivalent to a Small Vessel Lifejacket of 100 newtons.
- PFDs that are carried on board a fishing vessel must be Transport Canada and Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) approved, highly visible when inflated and fitted with reflective tape and a whistle. Look for "CAN/CGSB-65.11-88" on the tag, which indicates CGSB approval.
- Based on documentation from Transport Canada published on the NL-FHSA website, any fishing vessel that has PFDs that meet these criteria (and the PFDs are worn when there is a risk of drowning) will be in compliance with both the Transport Canada and provincial requirements for life jacket and PFD use.

PFDs may be inflatable or non-inflatable. If you choose to purchase an inflatable PFD, it is important to note that only automatic (hydrostatically activated) PFDs are approved for use in Newfoundland and Labrador. Those that require manual manipulation do not meet provincial Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. If you plan on wearing a PFD without a life jacket on board, remember that the PFD must provide a minimum of 100 newtons of buoyancy.

For more information on PFDs, check out the NL-FHSA website at www.nlfhsa.com





PFDs and Life Jackets Useless Unless Worn



NL-FHSA

**FISH HARVESTING
SAFETY ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 8277
368 Hamilton Avenue
St. John's, NL A1B 3N4

tel. 709-722-8177

fax. 709-722-8201

www.nlfhsa.com