CRAFT RAFT

USER MANUAL

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We sincerely thank you for purchasing Craft Raft.

Craft Raft is a Personal Watercraft (PWC) Inflatable Tow Raft (ITR) designed to allow towing of PWC's that are not operational, at speeds greater than the maximum speed set by the manufacturer when no tow tap is fitted.

This user manual outlines how to effectively use your new Craft Raft and should be used as a guide to safely get the most from your Craft Raft. We recommend adhering to these guidelines as much as practicable, however the master of the towing vessel is ultimately responsible for the safe and effective operation of the tow vessel, as well as safety of the crew, passengers and any vessel or craft being towed. A risk assessment should be performed every time the Craft Raft is used as to the suitability of performing the required tasking.

Craft Raft has 3 air chambers for safety to ensure the raft remains floating in the event that one or two chambers are damaged. There are also several lifting handles to carry the raft above ground to reduce damage to the fabric when transporting by hand whilst inflated . Additionally, there are d-rings placed around the raft to secure both the raft but also the PWC within it.

Inflation Procedure

1. Unfold and spread out the raft on flat surface clear of sharp objects or where the raft may become snagged.

2. The raft may be inflated on a vessel if there is sufficient room or alternatively placed into the water and inflated. Care should be taken to ensure the craft raft secured to the vessel, upright with inflation valves closed but easily accessible.

3. Turn the push-button of all valves counter clockwise so that the button of the valve rises slightly. This is the closed position.

4. Insert the inflation fitting / hose into the valve by pushing in and turning until the valve is locked into place.

5. Inflate the raft to its ideal working pressure using the foot pump or low pressure battery pump. Only inflate each air chamber to approximately 70% before inflating the next. This will reduce the chance of damaging the chamber wall inside the tube.

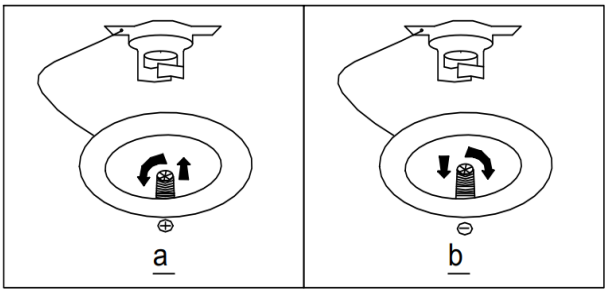
6. Other low-pressure electric pumps may be used to inflate the Craft Raft but extreme caution should be used. Do not inflate using a high-pressure compressor or over inflate the tube chamber above the maximum inflation pressure of 0.25 bar (3.6 PSI).

7. Once each chamber is inflated to 70%, alternate inflating each chamber until the tube is fully inflated. The tube should be firm but not hard. If hard, depress the valve button to allow a very small quantity of air to escape. (See following illustration).

3 valves are positioned on the tube (1 on the bow and 2 on either side of the tube).

Valve with Valve Cap Removed

Valve with Valve Cap Secured



a. Inflation: Turn the yellow button in the centre counterclockwise by 1/4 turn, make sure that the button comes up a little.
b. Deflation: Press the yellow button in centre down and turn it clockwise by 1/4 turn to lock it from coming up.

Inflation Notes:

- Craft Raft should always be fully inflated when in use, whether with or without a PWC loaded. This will reduce premature wear of the welded seams.
- Tube pressure should be monitored and adjusted slightly as necessary to ensure appropriate for the task and conditions.
- If the Craft Raft has not been inflated for more than 30 days, fully inflate to the required working by attaching the pump to each of the valves, one at a time, cycling the valves by allowing air to escape and reinflating. Inspect the tubes for wear and tear, leaks, or other damage.
- Ensure any foreign objects are removed and cleaned from the raft with particular attention paid to inflation valves and welded seams. Small items such as sand, dirt or other foreign matter may cause valves to not seat correctly and allow air to escape if not removed.
- The foot pump's suction function enables complete deflation, so that it can be better folded and packed away in its storage bag.
- A mild corrosion preventative like lanolin can be used on the valve springs to prevent corrosion of the valve spring.

Towing the Craft Raft – Without PWC

1. **The Craft Raft must be fully inflated to correct operating pressure when towing without PWC loaded into the Craft Raft. Not doing so can damage joins and seams leading to premature failure.**

2. With the Craft Raft fully inflated, fill the bow ballast bag with water to increase the weight of the Craft Raft. Filling the ballast bag increases the weight placed on the bow and reduces loss of control the Craft Raft. With the ballast Bag not filled, the Craft Raft may lose control when towing at high speeds or in medium to high wind situations.

Pictured above: Ballast Bag

3. With the Craft Raft empty, utilise the vessel towing line with towing hook and connect directly to the bow handle D-ring. The additional weight of the towing rope and hook connected directly to the raft will also aid to prevent loss of control of the raft.

Pictured: Super D-ring with handle

4. **Towing speed without PWC should not exceed a combined 25 knots wind and vessel speed. Loss of control of the Craft Raft may occur if this speed is exceeded. Extra care is to be taken if wind gusts are expected.**

NOTE: Sea state, weather conditions and raft load should always be taken into consideration prior to and during a tow. The Master of the Tow vessel is responsible for that vessel and any and all vessels or items under tow.

NOTE: Ensure relevant laws and regulations are followed pertaining to towing vessels including posting sufficient lookouts.

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Loading PWC into the Craft Raft

1. With the Craft Raft fully inflated, ensure the floor is submerged to allow the PWC to slide into the raft
2. Manage the bow of the PWC to the stern of the Craft Raft
3. Connect the supplied towing bridle to the PWC towing eye.
4. Using the supplied towing bridle, the PWC can be pulled into the Craft Raft. The PWC may also be manhandled into position.
5. Load the PWC into the towing position at the front of the loading bay (the bow of the PWC should be in contact with the inner bow tube/ ballast bag) Remove any water from the bow ballast bag.
6. If deemed appropriate due to prevailing weather or sea state conditions, the stern of the PWC can be secured using the D- rings at the stern of the Craft Raft. **Do not tighten stern lines where there is insufficient length to allow for tube or PWC movement within the Craft Raft.**

Towing Bridle PWC end

NOTE: The PWC is only correctly loaded into the Craft Raft if the PWC jet pump intake is covered by the floor of the Craft Raft. This will prevent water entering the engine whilst under tow at speed. If the Jet Pump is not covered by the floor of the Craft Raft, the PWC manufacturers recommended towing speed must be adhered to otherwise water may enter the PWC engine and cause catastrophic damage.

Towing the Craft Raft – With PWC

1. With towing bridle already connected to the PWC bow eye, connect the vessel towing rope to the opposite end of the supplied towing bridle.
2. Manage the Craft Raft and attached lines to ensure they are free of obstruction or being caught in propellers.
3. Handle the loaded Craft Raft into a normal position at the stern of the vessel when intending to long-tow at speed.
4. Let out sufficient towing line length as would be the case when towing a vessel in accordance with the vessel SMS or Standard Operating Procedures for towing taking into consideration prevailing weather and sea state.
5. Once Craft Raft is at the desired towing length, secure the vessel towing line and recheck the PWC remains correctly positioned and secured within the Craft Raft.
6. The towing vessel can be brought up to a safe towing speed.
7. The Craft Raft, towing lines and the PWC should be monitored at all times to ensure the tow is safe with an appropriate speed consistent with sea state and prevailing weather conditions as to not cause damage to the PWC, Craft Raft or towing and securing lines.

NOTE: Should the Craft Raft lose air pressure during a tow, it can still be utilised at speed so long as the floor of the Craft Raft is covering the Jet Pump intake, however repairs must be made as soon as practicable to prevent further damage to the Craft Raft joints and seams.

NOTE: Sea state, weather conditions and raft load should be taken into consideration prior to and during a tow. The Master of the Tow vessel is responsible for any and all vessels, items and or passengers under tow.

NOTE: Ensure relevant laws and regulations are followed pertaining to towing vessels including posting sufficient lookouts.

Passengers while Towing

The Craft Raft has been designed to allow passengers to ride on the towed PWC whilst under tow if it is not possible for passengers to be loaded onboard the towing vessel.

Passengers remaining on the unserviceable PWC must be briefed to ensure that:

1. The capacity of the PWC that is loaded into the Craft Raft must not be exceeded. The Craft Raft is not surveyed to allow additional passengers above that of the PWC.

2. Each person must wear an approved life jacket or personal flotation device.

3. All passengers must remain seated on the PWC seat only. Standing or sitting on the Craft Raft tubes is not recommended during a tow.

4. Passengers should maintain contact with the PWC at all times as in normal operation (grab handles on the Craft Raft can be used to hold onto as required)

5. All loads and passengers should be distributed evenly.

6. The Craft Raft, PWC and passengers must be monitored throughout the tow for safety.

NOTE: Sea state, weather conditions and raft load should be taken into consideration prior to and during a tow. The Master of the Tow vessel is responsible for any and all vessels, items and or passengers under tow.

Beaching & Mooring

Care should be taken to prevent damage to the Craft Raft. Craft Raft is made from lightweight but durable Achilles PVC however can be damaged easily when rubbed or dragged across hard or sharp objects.
A common sense approach should be taken to reduce damage to the fabric and welded seams by not contacting these types of surfaces.

Craft Raft should never be left exposed to direct sunlight or left in seawater for extended periods of time to improve longevity of the material, and welded seams.

If Craft Raft is to be temporarily left in direct sunlight or used in hot locations, it should be deflated slightly to allow for expansion caused by heat. (conversely, the tube will contract as temperatures drop)

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Cleaning and Storage

After use, the Craft Raft should be cleaned and washed while fully inflated with cold or warm fresh water (a mild boat wash suitable for PVC fabric can be used)

Once washed, the Craft Raft should be allowed to dry while fully inflated. Removing moisture prior to storage will improve the longevity of the material and glue. (Build up of moisture can allow mildew to build, staining the material and damaging the fabric and glue).

Once dry, Craft Raft Can be left inflated ready for use or deflated and placed into its storage bag ready for next use.
While not always possible, leaving the Craft Raft inflated to 80-90% in a dry, cool, protected place out of the sun will improve longevity by reducing folds and creases on the welded seams.

Damage:

A small repair kit is provided with the Craft Raft for small rips or tears or where glue from a seam has been exposed. Instructions on how to make a minor repair are included in the repair kit.

For larger damage, the Craft Raft can be taken to any inflatable boat repairer.

Warranty:

Craft Raft comes with a 6-month limited manufacturer's warranty to guard against poor workmanship or defects during the manufacturing process.
Damage caused by use or misuse is not covered by manufacturer's warranty.