



IDEST Torque

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This May 2018 issue brings us to the end of our first year of Torque. We have managed to provide our centres with quarterly issues throughout 2017 and into the New Year. We hope you have found them of use and informative. If you would like to put anything into Torque, please contact Alistair.

This issue covers a wide range of topics that have come to our attention over the past three months. They are all topics that you must be made aware of so that poor practice and quality of service does not come knocking at your centre's door.

Scanned documents to IDEST

When scans of documentation are sent to IDEST Admin Office or directly to inspectors, please give each scan a unique title. It is easier to identify the expected contents of a scan if it has a suitable title, e.g. M25 NotGo Ring. This is easily done when they are scanned and then saved, it will also save us hours of time having to re-title them before saving them in our system.

Oval thread gauges

It has come to our attention that some thread gauges bought on the Internet from foreign sources have in fact proved to be oval in shape. Such gauges can be bought very cheaply and appear to be exactly what is required but they are not suitable for testing cylinder or valve threads. Ensure that you buy from a reputable supplier that can provide you with a calibration certificate with your new gauges.

Date of certification for new technicians

At a recent IDEST audit by UKAS the question was raised as to when exactly was a technician approved to carry out cylinder testing without supervision. After much debate it was decided that the date that new technicians become approved is the date that appears on their certificate.

The date that appears on their certificate is the date that the Chief Engineer signs off their inspection as being complete in all aspects. This date appears on the D031 form that the Chief Engineer sends to the Chairman and is the evidence that the centre inspection has been closed as satisfactory.

So if you have new technicians that have been assessed by an IDEST inspector for the first time they must continue to test cylinders under supervision until the Chief Engineer informs you, by phone or email, that they are approved

Non-IDEST stamps

There are cylinders circulating that have a stamp marking that looks like an IDEST cylinder but are in fact a series of individual lines and curves. As an approved IDEST Centre you know this is not the way IDEST stamps come out!

The cylinder may also have a blue quadrant stuck on it that has been carefully removed from another IDEST-tested cylinder and reapplied.

If you come across any cylinders that follow this description please do not hesitate to contact Neil Minto, IDEST Chief Engineer, and report your findings.

Air Services

I have seen on the website of Air Services certain claims regarding cylinder testing, regulator servicing, and air testing and thought it was only fair to comment on the statements made there.

Air Services are claiming that they work to the same standards as IDEST. Now whilst we cannot comment on his current work practices or standards, I can inform you that we had to remove Air Services' IDEST certification two years ago as his workshop, documentation and methods were substantially below the safety standards and workshop practices required by IDEST.

The use of the cylinder on the Blue Quadrant is IDEST's trade mark and as such Air Services are "passing off" by using these copy stickers.

The law requires that employers protect their workforce in dive shops and centres by taking certain precautions, one of which is that cylinders are tested by 'competent persons'. One way of providing this assurance of competency is to follow an industry accredited standard such as that offered by IDEST, UKAS or ASSET as advised by the HSE (attached). I am not aware of any dive shops that will fill cylinders that are not tested, stamped and stickered by one of these organisations.

IDEST are accredited to ISO 17024:2012 by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). Our remit is to inspect and certify that people (technicians) and associated workshops, are working to our Code of Practice, CP11:2011 and British and European standards.

Our Code of Practice, CP 11:2011 is used and widely accepted in the UK, Cyprus, Canary Isles, Maldives and Thailand.

He is also claiming, or inferring, that he is a member of SITA. He is not. This can be confirmed by going to the SITA website and clicking on "members". (https://www.sita.org.uk/sita-members/dive_shops.php) Clearly Air Services are purporting to be something they are not!

And finally, attached with this issue of Torque, is the HSE guidance on air testing, which as you can see is totally different to that suggested by Air Services annual test. The law again requires that this be done at least every three months at a maximum.

Test Chamber 'O' ring and groove

It has come to our attention that some centres are having issues of their test chambers leaking. Please ensure that your test chamber lid groove and 'O' ring are kept in a clean condition.

The groove on the test chamber body should be in the region of 5-8 mm deep and the 'O' ring in the region of 9-12 mm. Using these values will ensure a good sealing surface and that the 'O' ring is unlikely to slip out of the recess.

Some centres have grooves and 'O' rings of smaller dimensions and do, at times, have difficulty sealing. This will result in slowing up of your turnover of tested cylinders and possibly a cylinder not being tested correctly if the leaks are not identified.

Standard Documentation

When we ask for documentation to be forwarded to us, we often have difficulty in being able to check that certain aspects of a cylinder test has been carried out.

This is mainly due to the fact that centres have generated their own worksheets and tried to include as much information as they can. As a result some important aspects are NOT included and other less essential items ARE included. In the event of an investigation, worksheets from two test centres are often compared. Unless the two centres are recording the same important details it is difficult to draw a comparison and come to a definitive conclusion.

We also hear of arguments about the destruction of a cylinder or a valve or possibly both. This is again often due to the written clarification on the acceptance sheet signed by the customer at the time the cylinder is dropped off for test.

When the new standard, ISO 18119:2018, is made official later this year, IDEST will be issuing some standard documentation to assist centres and to make it easier for investigators to be able to understand the workings of a specific cylinder test. Once this standardised documentation has been finalised it will be forwarded to all centres for them to use in future. It is hoped that this will streamline documentation across all IDEST centres.

Birchley Products has new owner

Birchley Products has a new owner and a new location. It has moved from Gloucestershire and is now based in the Aberdeen area. The new owner is Mr. Scott Waddell. Scott can be contacted on scott@octopus-ts.com or by telephone on +44 7920492774. The website is being updated but still available www.birchleyproducts.co.uk.