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Volume 20, Issue No 2

Welcome to issue No 2 for 2020. This finds us in a changed world from when the last issue came out in February. It is a troubling time and I am sure many of you will be unable to continue inspecting and testing cylinders. Lack of income and social distancing will be changing your lives dramatically.

We wish you well at this time and reassure you that we are here to help and support you through this taxing time. If you require any assistance do not hesitate to contact the office or Neil.

Please read through these articles as they contain, as usual, some very important information that you need to be aware of.

New addition to merchandising

A new item has been added to the list of tools on the merchandising page of the IDEST website. It is a **300 mm Steel Extraction Bar** used for releasing cylinder valves.

It has a G 5/8" thread at one end that can be threaded into the valve outlet. If the leverage on this bar is not sufficient then a hollow extension tube can be fitted over the bar for increased leverage.

Under no circumstances should this be used solely with a lump hammer for releasing the valve; as this can cause damage to both the valve and bar threads.



Recent UKAS Audit Feedback

At the back end of 2019 our annual UKAS Audit started with an inspection of the documentation and procedures that we follow. This was conducted down at Head Office in Godstone. This was followed by the practical audit in February. Alistair got selected this year as he had not been available for previous audits. This inspection involved an assessment of Alistair's ability to assess a technician performing the usual hydro testing skills from booking in the cylinder through to completing the test certificate. It was conducted at Reefers & Wreckers with Mick Turner being the poor soul being inspected.

The debrief after the assessment gave feedback on Alistair's performance and suggestions that he take up golf! Only joking. The results were very favourable and he has been given the all clear to continue assessing. The UKAS inspector also gave some suggestions of improvement for the workshop practices that he observed.

Avoid using a 5/8" bar and lump hammer to remove the cylinder valve; as this can cause high momentary stress to the valve body and its threads. Certainly,

use the 5/8" bar but use it with body strength or an extension bar if additional leverage is required.

Another suggestion was that when cylinders are being off-gassed in the workshop that a sign should be **permanently** displayed at the workshop entrance to indicate that off-gassing is taking place.

Concern was raised about how technicians control the situation when there are multiple units being tested at the same time. How do technicians ensure that valves and cylinders are not mixed up and a customer receives the wrong valve in their cylinder or vice versa?

You should have a procedure in your workshop manual/folder that identifies how this is achieved. Future IDEST inspections will be asking this question and a procedure will be expected to be found in your procedure manual.

The fourth and final suggestion was that when metal stamping a cylinder, technicians should be wearing ear defenders as the level of noise created is well above a safe level, albeit that it lasts a very short time.

New Price list from 1st April

In the February issue of Torque, the advanced notification of price increases was outlined. The prices were slightly over quoted and so this is just a reminder that prices are going to increase as of the 1st April 2020.

INITIAL inspections for a Test Centre will cost £595 and £550 for an Inspection Centre. This price includes the first technician.

RENEWAL inspections for Test and Inspection Centres will be £495 and again this price includes the first technician. Additional technician inspections for initial and renewal inspections will cost £95 each.

Annual registration for both Test Centres and Inspection Centres will be £125.

Are you training new technicians?

It has come to light recently that some centres have been training up new technicians in-house. Absolutely nothing wrong with this; training from those who clearly know what they are doing. However, it is imperative that if you are training a new technician that you are using the IDEST Training Log Sheets.

These Training Log Sheets are available from the Chief Engineer, Neil Minto, and a copy must be made available to the inspector when that new technician is assessed. Without these log sheets that technician cannot be approved.

Our UKAS approved procedures identify that written evidence must be available to show how and when the new technician was trained; that is why IDEST has created the Training Log Sheets (D023).

Are you selling Air Guns?

Some time back IDEST put together a three-fold leaflet for those centres selling air guns and cylinders for air gun users. The inspection and testing of cylinders used for air guns can cause some confusion with their owners, who are not divers.

Steve Gibson, of Sunderland Scuba Centre, kindly put together a leaflet that explains what air gun owners have to do with their cylinders, the difference between air-gun cylinders and diving cylinders, what an inspection entails and what happens when the cylinder is hydraulically tested.

If you would like some of these three-fold leaflet lets for your centre, please contact Alistair. These leaflets are FOC and can be supplied at 25 leaflets to each centre requesting them. It is important that IDEST informs everyone using compressed air cylinders for whatever sport.

Display stands for leaflets

For several years now IDEST has been giving out plastic display stands for those centres that wish to display the four three-fold leaflets that are available. This collection of leaflets includes:

- All about IDEST
- Markings on diving cylinders
- Testing of diving cylinders
- Air gun cylinders vs diving cylinders

If you would like a set of these display stands FOC then contact Pat at the office, who will provide these for you.

IDEST NEWS being circulated

Communications is key to letting folk know what is going on in the diving world. Many a time IDEST has not been able to fully communicate changes that have taken place directly to divers and the diving world.

That recently changed when a Communications Matrix was set up that included most of the diving magazines, the diving trade, and the major diving and technical diving organisations. Important items from Torque are placed in IDEST NEWS and have been circulated to all those organisations that responded to our request to broadcast the latest news.

You should start to see IDEST NEWS items in most diving magazines, cascaded to members and instructors of diving organisations and members of the trade including SITA. This we hope will educate as many people as possible as to changes that are taking place and IDEST can be seen to be publicising information that divers need to know.

Inspection deficiencies to be listed

Part of the IDEST inspection is the debrief of technicians on 'deficiencies' and 'inspector's comments'. Deficiencies will mean that the technician or centre will not be approved for inspection and testing of cylinders. Inspector's

comments are advice and suggestions for improvement on the setup of the facilities and are not needed for approval.

It has come to our knowledge that several reports contain inspector comments that should really be deficiencies. A time period must be agreed between the technician and inspector as to when any deficiencies are to be completed. Evidence is required to be sent to the inspector to satisfy the deficiencies and then approval will be granted.

In 2020 IDEST will be looking closely at all aspects of the inspection comments and any aspects not remedied by the following inspection will go down as a deficiency. Procedures not being kept up-to-date will constitute a deficiency, failure to comply with CP11:2011 and IDEST guidance will be considered a deficiency and approval will not be granted.

Please ensure you are complying with all IDEST guidance, procedures are up-to-date and that deficiencies do not cause your centre to miss getting approval at your next inspection.

Changes to inspection requirements

IDEST is accredited by UKAS to ISO/IEC 17024:2012 and as such have to comply with any changes that UKAS request. Recent inspections by UKAS have raised a couple of aspects that IDEST has not been assessing during inspections.

One aspect is the need for technicians to demonstrate that they can deal with blocked valves. Asking whether a technician 'knows' how to deal with such a blocked valve and getting a verbal answer is no longer acceptable; a simulated demonstration must be performed.

Similarly seeing a comparison chart positioned behind the working pressure gauge does not mean that all technicians in the centre can perform this skill of obtaining a comparison chart between master pressure gauge and the working gauge. In future all technicians will be expected to perform this skill prior to the start of the inspection to illustrate that they have been taught this skill and can perform it unaided.

Torque wrench calibration checks

The Standard for checking the calibration of torque wrenches ISO 6789:2003 has been superseded by ISO 6789:2017. This latest version is a lot more extensive test. This means it is also a lot more expensive test.

Fortunately, the original standard ISO 6789:2003 is still valid until some future date. This is because not all the users of torque wrenches need a full new standard calibration check. It is not known which calibration laboratories are offering both and which are only offering the latest one.

When you send a wrench in for calibration check, ask for it to be done under ISO 6789:2003. This is quite acceptable to IDEST

Incompatible cylinder “O” ring groove and valve flange.

We have been informed that there are more cylinder and valve combinations being seen with incompatible valve flanges and “O” ring grooves. This occurs with some imported cylinder valves.

All cylinders manufactured to BS, EN or ISO Standards use a valve with a flange that is flat in accordance with EN 144-1.

At one time a certain number of valves were inadvertently imported that were manufactured to DIN 477-6 and were intended for the German market. These were to be used with a cylinder where the taper is 70°.

Both types have correct stem threading, 25 x 2 mm, but there is a 70° tapered step under the flange of the DIN 477-6 valve. This allows the ingress of water and hence potential corrosion of the “O” ring groove. This corrosion could lead to further leakage.

If this combination is found then the owner should be informed of the situation and the valve replaced with a correctly flanged type.

IDEST Test Centre Update

We have had the following changes to the IDEST Test Centre listing since the last issue of Torque.

New centres

None

Leaving centres

None