

In This Issue

- Volume 26, Issue No 2
- Change of Chief Engineer
- Technical sheets updated
- Non conformance
- Concerns and Complaints
- Alerts
- A case for valve serial no's
- Go easy with the grease!
- Change of Document Control
- Counterfeit or genuine?
- Dive shop fire
- IDEST Test Centre Update

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Volume 26, Issue No 2

Welcome to the second IDEST Torque of 2026. This issue is a little lean compared to previous, we are running out of ideas so why not send us your suggestions!

In this issue learn about changes to roles with the team; update on our recent alerts; review nonconformance and complaints; and inform about updates to our Technical Information sheets.

From the field we look further into potential falsely certified cylinders; consider the case for valve serialisation; look at the consequences of too much grease; and share information about a fire at a dive shop.

Regarding potentially counterfeit or otherwise dodgy cylinders and valves please keep sending us your finds (but do include lots of details, sources, photos, so we get a complete picture).

Change of Chief Engineer



Neil Minto

Neil Minto took over the role of Chief Engineer from Mike Todd back in 2010 and has been a steadfast pair of hands at the core of IDEST ever since. Anyone who has had the pleasure of working with Neil will attest to the depth of his knowledge and helpfulness.



Hywel Dyer

Sadly, Neil has faced some serious health challenges recently, and although we are pleased to say that his trajectory is much improved, we have asked Hywel Dyer to rotate into the role of Chief Engineer.

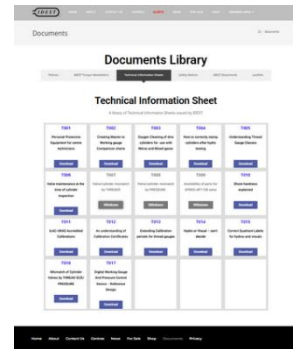
One of the prerequisites for the role, at UKAS insistence, is to be a Chartered Engineer and Hywel is CEng, IMechE. Hywel lives in Pembrokeshire and has a wide range of experience across multiple disciplines from a long engineering career which includes working abroad.

We are delighted that IDEST will continue to benefit from Neil's expertise as he moves into the role of a mentor and consultant, and we congratulate Hywel on his new appointment.

Technical Information updated

It's been a work in progress for a longtime, but we have finally refreshed our Technical Information sheets and published them on the website - www.idest.co.uk

Our 'T' sheets are where we provide information, guidance and explanations for matters pertinent to cylinder testing. They cover a broad range of topics including PPE, gauges, comparison charts, oxygen cleaning, valve maintenance, calibrations, labelling, etc.



T007 and T008 are withdrawn, replaced by T016 - Mismatch of Cylinder Valves by THREAD SIZE/ PRESSURE. T009 is withdrawn as the valve referred is now fully obsolete.

Here is the full list:

- T001 - Personal Protective Equipment for centre technicians
- T002 - Creating Master to Working gauge Comparison charts
- T003 - Oxygen Cleaning of dive cylinders for use with Nitrox
- T004 - How to correctly stamp cylinders after hydro testing
- T005 - Understanding Thread Gauge Classes
- T006 - Valve maintenance at the time of cylinder inspection
- T010 - Shore-hardness explained
- T011 - ILAC-UKAS Accredited Calibrations
- T012 - An understanding of Calibration Certificates
- T013 - Extending Calibration periods for thread gauges
- T014 - Hydro or Visual – can't decide
- T015 - Correct Quadrant Labels for hydro's and visuals
- T016 - Mismatch of Cylinder Valves by Thread Size/ Pressure
- T017 - Digital Working Gauge and Pressure Control Device

With the updates we've tried to address some of the changes that have happened within our sector and scope of cylinder testing, for example T006 now encompasses non-serviceable valves.

Non conformance

IDEST operates a Corrective and Preventative Action system as standard practice. In addition to being a mandatory aspect of our accreditation we see continuous improvement of our processes as an essential part of the organisation. There are three NC to mention this month...



NC 26-02: A third party reported seeing an IDEST quadrant sticker on a low pressure thin-walled welded stainless steel Amerex cylinder used in fire suppression at one of their customer locations. Likely a DOT 4BA cylinder, such cylinders are not in scope of the IDEST scheme, we do not inspect welded cylinders, no centre has authority to carry this out or use our labels for such. Sadly, the reporter was not permitted to photograph the cylinder, and they could not be certain of the centre number involved. Our enquiries are ongoing to identify the centre so we can have a conversation with them.

We remind all centres that our scope of work comes from our UKAS Schedule of Accreditation (see last edition of Torque for details) but in summary ISO 11623 (Composite cylinders) and ISO 18119 (Seamless steel and seamless aluminium-alloy gas cylinders). If you choose to undertake testing or inspection beyond of this scope then you are operating outside of the IDEST scheme and must not use IDEST logo, labels or centre number.

NC 26-03: Through May and June D031 inspection reports from Inspectors submitted for review and sign-off as part of ongoing centre certification backed up making our target 30-day turnaround unachievable. The principal reviewer and signatory for these reports is the Chief Engineer who sadly was experiencing some serious health challenges, and some IT problems. At the same time our Chairman was also undergoing various medical investigations, as a result we were a little late triggering our fallback protocol which is routing such documents to the Assistant to the Chief Engineer. Once this was put into action the backlog was cleared. We will look at the process to see if we need to make any changes, but this was (hopefully) unprecedented circumstances. [closed]

NC 26-05: A centre reported that they had not received notification of their annual membership. We examined our records. These showed that our standard reminder email had been sent on time, ahead of their renewal deadline. The email had two attachments – an invoice for membership, and a yearly membership documents pack. The centre had paid the invoice but not returned the completed documents, and our reminder / delinquent procedures were being triggered. It transpired that the centre had not read the email fully and missed the document pack attachment. They were quick to respond and now we have their paperwork in full. **Please make sure you read admin correspondence carefully!** [closed]

Concerns and Complaints

Two complaints were opened and one resolved since the last edition:

C-026 a diver raised a complaint regarding incorrect punching on four quadrant labels, supplying photographs of the cylinder stamping and labels. Three cylinders were hydro tested in March 2026 with blue quadrant labels affixed showing a valid period of 18 months instead of 30 months (Sept 2027 punched out instead of Sept 2028). One cylinder was visually inspected in March 2026 with a green quadrant label affixed showing a valid period of 18 months instead of 30 months (Sept 2027 punched out instead of Sept 2028).

We contacted the centre who carried out the cylinder inspections. They were very quick to return copies of the cylinder worksheets which confirmed incorrect punching. The matter was then swiftly resolved, to the satisfaction of the diver, through replacement correctly punched quadrant labels.



TIP: Putting a date chart on the wall adjacent to the cylinder workbench and updating it at the beginning of the month when performing a gauge comparison, is a handy way to reduce errors.

C-023, C-025, C-027 – Remain open, under investigation.

Alerts

We have not added any new alerts to the website since the last edition, but we do have some updates...



Improper use of Notified Body markings

We contacted Diving Safety at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) regarding marketplace cylinders without satisfactory UK/EU certifications being sold in the UK. Our report was considered by the relevant internal department who responded that *"this is a consumer issue and not one covered by HSE"*. They advised it is a matter for Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) and kindly referred our concerns on.



Office for Product
Safety & Standards

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) is part of the Department for Business and Trade. It's *"primary purpose is to protect people and places from product-related harm, ensuring consumers and businesses can buy and sell products with confidence"*.

The OPSS replied that our allegations have been passed to their Incident Management Team to review. They explained their role *"includes providing specialist support and advice to local authority trading standards teams and coordinating work across local authorities where action is needed on a national scale"*. They stated, in addition to recording our information as part of ongoing monitoring of product safety risks, they would pass details to the relevant Trading standards team nearest to any UK business selling products of concern.

So now we have a clear path for escalating any potentially unsafe products being sold in the UK. The scope includes online retailers, and where there is a UK legal entity involved, the matter will be notified to the nearest regional Trading Standards team.

To give the OPSS the greatest chance of success we need specific details of any product of concern and the seller of that product – for example: full details of the business seller, copies of adverts and weblinks, clear photographs of the product, clear description of the safety concern etc.

IDEST and the OPSS cannot act on vague or incomplete reports of potentially unsafe products so please take time and care to gather full details of the product and the seller before escalating any concerns to IDEST or the OPSS.

Airgun valves update

Following our 'alert' regarding airgun valves we were pleased to be contacted by Mike Hurney from The Shooting Party.

TheShootingParty

Mike was keen to work with IDEST regarding our concerns which is fantastic. He anticipates having a sample valve with new markings in the UK early in July and is going to send us an example.

Whilst we do not provide approvals for valves, he is keen to get our feedback. He then anticipates the factory will enter volume production and provide formal PED certification. Once we see the new sample valve, we plan to discuss availability of drawings and spare parts too.

He advised *"if any of your test stations are presented with an earlier valve of ours that they believe to be insufficiently, or incorrectly marked, we will replace with a new valve FOC"*.

And added *"Hopefully, by working through this with IDEST we can bring reassurance to consumers, Test Centres and retailers, for the benefit of all parties"*.

We are grateful for this proactive response to our concerns. It demonstrates the benefit to divers of buying from local shops or 'clicks and mortar' companies that are UK legal entities. We feel unlikely to see such a robust response from 'marketplace' sellers.

We will update our Alert as soon as we have sight of PED compliance, and follow up on this case in the next edition.

The case for valve serial numbers

Our Southeast Asia Representative raised an interesting issue brought up by a dive centre...

"Upon completion of a recent triennial inspection of a Maldives dive centre the owner raised a concern on which he wanted me to comment. He informed me that he was aware of unauthorised modifications being made to cylinder valves by uncertified technicians.



Most of the cylinders which the centre handles come from live-aboard vessels which rarely come alongside at a pier. It would appear that the compressor technicians and/or divemaster's aboard the boats are carrying out maintenance without the knowledge of the test centre.

When the cylinders are returned to the test centre for inspection the centre technician is aware that the valve, or some part of the valve, have been changed. Whilst this may not be illegal, if an accident was to happen the test centre could be held liable for the actions of the live-aboard technician's modifications.

It has been suggested that an additional clause could be added to the terms and conditions on the cylinder booking-in form which the cylinder owner is required to sign and accept. It could state *"Should any modifications be made to the tested cylinder or valve by the owner or his/her representatives, Xxxxx Test Centre cannot be held liable for any for any damage or injury sustained as a consequence of failure of either."*

As few valves currently have serial numbers, the Maldives technician is also suggesting that an identifiable mark could be made with an etching tool on the valve barrel which is hidden

when the valve handwheel is in position. This will allow him to confirm whether the valve has been changed.

In the meantime, it is hoped that all valves will soon have serial numbers to help in linking valves to cylinders and do away with the need for valve tags during inspections."

We discussed this at our monthly inspector video call with the following consensus:

1. *Etching fundamentally changes the surface of metal, could invalidate the valve approvals, and would likely invalidate any manufacturer guarantee. This should not be used.*
2. *Using a non-destructive method such as permanent marker, torque seal, cross-check or other suitable tamper-evident marking system would be permitted.*
3. *IDEST will continue to petition for mandatory valve serialisation through the UK Standards Committees in the hope that this will eventually be adopted by ISO.*
4. *The IDEST D079 - Cylinder Booking in Form is a recommended template which covers the essential information. Centres may add to this where they have justifiable need. The addition by a centre of a paragraph such as the one suggested above would not cause any problems during recertification.*



We welcome thoughts or suggestions to admin@idest.co.uk.

Whoa there, easy with the grease!

A centre reported "just had this on a cylinder in for test - when I took the valve apart the previous test centre applied soo much grease to the hp seat that it's been pushed in to the din outlet"

The report included these photos:



We can't be sure it was the previous test centre, or another party but not good practice to add so much grease in this area.

Please let us have your horror stories for future editions (send to torque@idest.co.uk).

Counterfeit or genuine?

Following our Alert regarding Improper use of Notified Body markings we have been contacted several times by centres asking about individual cylinders that have come in for test.

We are keen for centres to send all the info they can on potentially counterfeit cylinders and valves. But please bear in mind whilst we are very interested in examples of counterfeit or unauthorised cylinders being placed on the market in the UK, so we can refer them to the OPSS, we do not have the resources to investigate every case.

Our general advice is to obtain details of the manufacturer and/or seller and contact them for a copy of their Declaration of Conformity, and other documentation to prove compliance with the PED. At the same time, you may also wish to request drawings of the cylinder, so you have the technical information necessary to support the inspection and test.

Where you establish counterfeit or unauthorised cylinders, please gather full details and send them to us. If you cannot satisfy yourself of the bonafide credentials of the cylinder, then the most appropriate action may be to refuse to test the cylinder.

Enquiries are not always fruitless...

DirZone cylinder

A test centre in Kent received a DIRZONE 207 bar 11.1 litre aluminium cylinder. These have gained popularity with sections of the diving community as side-slung cylinders.

The centre was concerned as the cylinder is manufactured in China by a company called Sinoges Industry Equipment (Wuhan) Co., Ltd. and they sensibly wanted assurance of suitable paperwork before conducting any work. [C-028]



The cylinder is marked as follows:

M25x2 CN SINOGES 241707A 118 AA6061T6 CAT.IV
12.64MM 14.12KG 11.1L PW207 PH310.5BAR DIVING BREATHING GAS GR.1
CE 0036 TS -40/65°C EN ISO 7866 D ^{TS} 2024/10 DIRZONE

We contacted DIRZONE in Germany who put IDEST in touch with their supply company: SCUBATECH Sp. z O.O. Ul. Lubieszńska 2, 72-006 Mierzyn, Poland.

Scubatech quickly supplied supporting material for the cylinder in question along with others shown on DIRZONE and SCUBATECH website www.scubatech.pl. The documents cover ADR/RID 2021 and DIRECTIVE 2014/68/EU (PED) and have been forward to the enquiring test centre.

We have stored copies within our online BOX storage system and are happy to make these available to any IDEST Test centre technicians upon request to admin@idest.co.uk.

Scubatech President Tomasz Stopyra has also mentioned that the drawings may be downloaded from www.tecline.com.pl.

Our thanks go to Tomasz at Scubatech and Jessica Dühn at DIRZONE for prompt and positive support in ensuring traceability and dimension information required under ISO 18119 and ISO 11623 inspection and test procedures.

Bisley cylinder

We were contacted by a centre who "had a gentleman in this morning who asked me to fill his new cylinder which was bought indirectly from Bisley online. I am concerned that Bisley may have instructed the Chinese manufacturer to brand the exact same cylinders with their Logo and they are now selling in the UK. I have given the gentlemen a copy of the latest [Torque] newsletter and told him to contact the seller referencing page 18". Photos of the cylinder were kindly supplied.



The cylinder carries a Notified Body marking 'CE 1282' which belongs to [Ente Certificazione Macchine srl \(ECM\)](#), Italy. Per the alert ECM have reported concerns regarding the improper use of their mark so it raised potential for concern regarding the legitimacy of the cylinder.

A check of the latest ECM [List of improper uses](#) and [List of Forged Documents](#) did not show this cylinder, which is an encouraging sign.

We have contacted Bisley and are waiting for them to confirm notified body approval, send us a copy of the EC Declaration of Conformity, and ideally some technical drawings.

Given the supplier reputation we are hopeful of a positive outcome in this case but until we have sight of the relevant documentation, we must repeat our advice **to treat with caution any cylinder where conformity with the pressure directives and standards is uncertain**. User and filler safety are paramount, and if appropriate refuse testing and/or filling altogether.

Change of Document Manager



Mike Collins

Mike Collins has been an inspector with IDEST since 2012, and for many years has been our Document Manager.

Mike was instrumental in IDEST's re-accreditation to ISO/IEC 17024 in 2015, writing the submission document for the organisation, he also has significant knowledge and experience of high-pressure systems.



Nick Clark

Mike indicated a desire to hand over day to day document management and Nick Clark has agreed to take this on. Again, we are delighted that IDEST will continue to benefit from Mike's expertise as he joins Neil in a consultant role.

East Coast Divers, Brookline, MA fire

A fire devastated East Coast Divers, Brookline, Massachusetts on May 28 destroying the company's retail store, classrooms, service department, rental inventory and decades of accumulated equipment. The blaze also triggered multiple cylinder explosions.



Around 60 firefighters responded to the incident, while East Coast Divers staff went door-to-door evacuating residents. One employee suffered minor burn injuries, and a firefighter got a laceration while tackling the fire. The exact cause is still under investigation.



Founded in 1974, the dive centre has trained divers across the Boston area for more than five decades and is one of the region's best-known diving businesses. The financial impact of the fire is estimated at more than \$400,000 (£300,000). With the incident occurring just as the business was entering its busiest season.



While dive centres are often measured by their storefronts, classrooms and equipment inventories, their real value lies in the communities they create. For thousands of divers across Massachusetts and New England, East Coast Divers served as a gateway into the underwater world for more than 50 years. This has fostered amazing community support with a [GoFundMe](#) campaign launched by the local diving community raising over \$100,000 (£77,000) since the blaze.

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TIP: In the UK under the [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order](#) in England and Wales (or equivalent fire safety legislation in Scotland), every organization must complete a workplace **Fire Safety Risk Assessment**. When did you last review yours? It can also be good practice to inform your local Fire Station that you handle and store compressed gasses so they can prioritise any attendance.

[Reproduced in good faith for education from the following sources]
[East Coast Divers Vows to Rebuild After Fire Destroys Historic Brookline Dive Centre](#)
[Fire set off explosions in 50-year-old dive-shop](#)
[Air tanks explode in fire at Brookline dive shop](#)

Missing Torque?

Have you missed any edition of Torque? Don't worry, all of the past issues can be downloaded from the members section of the **IDEST website**. Take a look!



IDEST Test Centre Update

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

New centres

Morcombe Area Dive Shop [E4]

Leaving centres

None

Reinstated Centres

None

Temporarily suspended centres

Dive UK [C8]

Diveline (medical) [2G] (change of ownership in progress)

Fully suspended centres

Lambay Divers [5D]

Mevagh Dive Centre [4Y]

Scuba Dive West [6H]

The use of blue or green quadrants or the IDEST stamp to validate a cylinder test or inspection at any suspended centre is not recognised. Temporary suspension indicates that active dialog is underway in the hope of resuming testing in due course.

A final thought...

We hope you've enjoyed reading this issue of Torque. Please let [Alison](#) have your feedback on this issue and suggestions for topics in upcoming editions. Thank you!

The use of brand names and/or any mention of specific commercial products or services herein is solely for informational purposes and does not imply endorsement by IDEST, nor discrimination against similar brands, products or services not mentioned. Please report errors, issues or concerns to torque@idest.co.uk

E&OE