



Circular – IRB Manufacturers Update

Title: Thundercat Inflatables IRB Update
Department: Coastal Safety
Circular: 34/24-25
Date: 13 November 2024
Audience: Clubs, Lifesaving Services, State & Territory centres, Australian Lifeguard Services
Summary: Update of current approvals of IRB Manufacturers

Background:

The SLS Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) is a motorised inflatable boat crewed by two (2) lifesavers/lifeguards to conduct SLS operations in the surf zone and near shore environments. Surf Life Saving Australia ensure the compliance of IRBs against the SLSA IRB Technical Specification.

This equipment is required to be of the highest industry standard and does not present any intolerable risk to members.

The monitoring and management of compliance is critical with manufacturers expected to ensure equipment meets both the SLSA Compliance as set by the relevant committees as well as ensuring that the craft meets a 'fit for purpose' criteria for the organisation.

Thundercat Gen III

SLSA was made aware that a number of Clubs had experienced cracked transoms in Thundercat Gen III IRB's. SLSA previously advised Thundercat to pause distribution of the Thundercat Gen III until the issue had been rectified and that the enhanced IRB be tested by an independent Naval Architect as well as SLSA members to ensure that the IRB is fit for purpose.

SLSA and an independent Naval Architect recently conducted testing on the enhanced IRB which concluded that the Gen III IRB is fit for purpose and that Thundercat can now resume the distribution of IRBs to Surf Life Saving Clubs in Australia.

Endorsed Manufacturers:

SLSA currently has three manufacturers endorsed to build IRB hulls to the specification.

Manufacturer	Hull Model
Zodiac Milpro	ZMSR 385
Thundercat	GEN III
Achillies	Achilles SSX385

General Notes:

SLSA will continue to work with members and IRB manufacturers to ensure that the SLS IRB technical specification meets the operational requirements of Surf Life Saving.

Any further information contact the Coastal Safety Team:

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