



TECHNICAL ALERT No. 17-04

Lifejacket light battery failure: Alcares, Jack A1-Alk and Jack ARH-Alk

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Technical Alert is related to defective lifejacket lights manufactured by Alcares, type Jack A1-Alk and Jack ARH-Alk, distributed by Datrex.
- 1.2. The Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) wishes to bring the information referenced in Paragraph 2 to the attention of interested parties¹.

2. Summary

- 2.1. A number of ships have reported issues relating to defective lifejacket lights manufactured by Alcares and distributed by Datrex.
- 2.2. Examination of the lights revealed that the batteries had leaked, resulting in contamination on the main board and resulting in the lights being considered unfit for further use.



¹ This Technical Alert is provided by the Bahamas Maritime Authority with the aim of highlighting incidents, lessons learnt and to increase awareness, which may help avoid similar incidents occurring elsewhere.



- 2.3. It has also been reported that exposure to environmental conditions (humidity) may cause premature activation of the lights, resulting in draining of the batteries. The manufacturer has advised that leaking batteries mostly occur after the battery has discharged.
- 2.4. The manufacturer has recognised the safety concerns and have changed the battery type – a new leak-proof battery design has been implemented to resolve this issue.
- 2.5. Alcares will replace lights that have failed with the new battery type free of charge, unless it is apparent that the light has been used or abused.
- 2.6. A letter outlining the issue and action taken by Alcares is provided at Annex 1.
- 2.7. Guidance from Alcares on identifying whether or not environmental exposure has taken place are provided in Annex 2.

3. Validity

- 3.1. This alert is valid until further notice.

4. Revision History

Rev.0 (26 May 2017) – First issue



Dear Customer,

Recently, a safety bulletin from cruises.org was issued regarding faulty water activated Alcares alkaline lifejacket lights type Jack A1-Alk and Jack ARH-Alk, due to leaking batteries and therefore declared defective.

During the five years we have made the alkaline lights, we have used more than 5 million alkaline batteries. In all respect, it is a very small quantity that has failed so far, a high estimate is that less than 0.005% has been found leaking - In our opinion this is acceptable. But we also understand that you are concerned with the safety of the passengers and your image and this is perfectly understandable. We will assist.

It's not possible to measure if an alkaline battery will fail before expiry. It can have normal voltage and still have decreased capacity or be defective so it will fail after a while. As all manufacturers we have to rely on our suppliers for the batteries to sell us good and functional batteries. We conducted our due diligence in approving our suppliers for the batteries we used and have a guaranty from our battery suppliers giving the batteries a 10 year storage life.

It's important to try to distinguish between used and defective lights, which can be hard and sometimes impossible.

The defective lights must be changed of course. Alcares will send replacement lights free of charge with the new battery type for any light that might fail, if its not apparent that it has been used or abused. We urge you to do a regular check, so we can be sure that all lights are fully functional at all times.

Several companies have used our lights to brand their own company. We would like to state, that Alcares is the manufacturer of the lights and therefore the only company responsible, and any other company mentioned/branded on our lights has no involvement what so ever in the production of the lights.

We have reviewed all our production procedures and construction plans for the lights. The design is fine. With the new leak proof VARTA battery, the leaky battery issue is terminated.

All the alkaline batteries are sealed in a plastic container, the leaking material is contained inside the light, and in that form poses no hazard for human beings

We apologize for the inconvenience and hope with the explanation above and the preventive measures, that we have gained your trust again in our lights.

Please feel free to contact Alcares directly for any questions regarding leaking batteries or replacement of lights.

Best regards
Thomas Alkjaer

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HOW TO DISTINGUIS BETWEEN LIGHTS THAT HAS BEEN EXPOSED TO WATER OR NOT

WATER SENCE EXPOSED TO WATER:

WATER SENCE CORODED

DARKENED WATER SENCE

LIGHT HAS BEEN ACTIVATED BY WATER!



WATER SENCE NOT EXPOSED TO WATER:

WATER SENCE BRIGHT/METTALIC

NO COROSION

LIGHT HAS NOT BEEN ACTIVATED BY WATER!

