



JOINT CANADA-UNITED STATES
NATIONAL STANDARD

ANSI/CAN/UL 9595:2025

STANDARD FOR SAFETY

Factory Follow-Up on Personal
Flotation Devices (PFDs)

SCC FOREWORD

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UL Standard for Safety for Factory Follow-Up on Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs), ANSI/CAN/UL 9595

First Edition, Dated June 4, 2020

Summary of Topics

This revision of ANSI/CAN/UL 9595 dated March 7, 2025 includes the following changes in requirements:

- Vertical load test only for belt and chest style inflatables; [A8.1](#)***
- Correction of Table in A7 Horizontal Load Test for UL 1123 Youth Devices; [A7.1](#)***

Text that has been changed in any manner or impacted by ULSE's electronic publishing system is marked with a vertical line in the margin.

The revised requirements are substantially in accordance with Proposal(s) on this subject dated October 18, 2024.

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1

ANSI/CAN/UL 9595:2025

Standard for Factory Follow-Up on Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

First Edition

June 4, 2020

This ANSI/CAN/UL Safety Standard consists of the First Edition including revisions through March 7, 2025.

The most recent designation of ANSI/UL 9595 as an American National Standard (ANSI) occurred on March 7, 2025. ANSI approval for a standard does not include the Cover Page, Transmittal Pages, Title Page, Preface or SCC Foreword.

This standard has been designated as a National Standard of Canada (NSC) on March 7, 2025.

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CONTENTS

Preface	7
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INTRODUCTION

1 Scope	9
2 Normative References	9
3 Terms and Definitions	9
4 General Requirements	10
5 Responsibilities of Certification and Inspection Bodies	12
5.1 General	12
5.2 Assignment of a Process Rating	13
5.3 Elements of the Follow-Up Program	14
6 Responsibilities of the Applicant and/or Factory	17
6.1 General	17
6.2 Recordkeeping	17
6.3 Calibration of Testing and Measuring Equipment	18
6.4 Split Inspection Responsibilities	18
6.5 Tests to be conducted by the Applicant and/or Factory	19

ANNEX A (Normative) Test Methods

TEST METHODS FOR ALL PFDS

A1 Placard Inspection	23
A1.1 Method	23
A1.2 Basis of Acceptability	23
A2 Pamphlet Inspection	23
A2.1 Method	23
A2.2 Basis of Acceptability	24
A3 Detailed Product Examination	24
A3.1 Method	24
A3.2 Basis for Acceptability	24
A4 Final Lot Inspection	24
A4.1 Method	24
A4.2 Basis for Acceptability	24

TEST METHODS FOR INHERENTLY BUOYANT PFDS

A5 Foam Buoyancy Test	25
A5.1 Method	25
A5.2 Basis of Acceptability	26
A6 Foam Buoyancy Distribution Test	26
A6.1 Method	26
A6.2 Basis of Acceptability	26
A7 Horizontal Load Test	26
A7.1 Method	26
A7.2 Basis of Acceptability	29
A8 Vertical Load Test	29
A8.1 Method	29
A8.2 Basis of Acceptability	33
A9 Vinyl Coating Thickness Test	33
A9.1 Method	33

A9.2 Basis of Acceptability	33
-----------------------------------	----

TEST METHODS FOR INFLATABLE PFDS

A10 Buoyancy and Inflation Medium Retention Test	33
A10.1 Method	33
A10.2 Basis of Acceptability	35
A11 Uninflated Buoyancy Test	35
A11.1 Method	35
A11.2 Basis of Acceptability	35
A12 Over Pressure Test	35
A12.1 Method	35
A12.2 Basis of Acceptability	36
A13 Air Retention Test	36
A13.1 Method	36
A13.2 Basis of Acceptability	37
A14 Seal Seam Strength Test	38
A14.1 Method	38
A14.2 Basis of Acceptability	38
A15 Strength of Attachment Test	39
A15.1 Method	39
A15.2 Basis of Acceptability	39

TEST METHODS FOR THROWABLE PFDS

A16 Ring Buoy Body and Grab Line Strength Tests	39
A16.1 Method	39
A16.2 Basis of Acceptability	40
A17 Horseshoe Buoy Body/Grab Strap Strength Test	40
A17.1 Method	40
A17.2 Basis of Acceptability	41
A18 Cushion Grab Strap Strength Test	41
A18.1 Method	41
A18.2 Basis For Acceptability	42

TEST METHODS FOR PFDS WITH RESCUE HARNESSES

A19 Rescue Harness PFD Attachment Release Test	42
A19.1 Method	42
A19.2 Basis of Acceptability	44
A20 Rescue Harness Strength Test	44
A20.1 Method	44
A20.2 Basis of Acceptability	44
A21 Rescue Harness PFD Pull-Toggle Security of Attachment Test	45
A21.1 Method	45
A21.2 Basis of Acceptability	45

TEST METHODS FOR INHERENTLY BUOYANT AND THROWABLE KAPOK PFDS

A22 Bulk Processed Kapok Buoyancy Test	45
A22.1 Method	45
A22.2 Basis of Acceptability	46
A23 Kapok Purity	46
A23.1 Method	46
A23.2 Basis of Acceptability	46

A24	Kapok Buoyancy Test	46
	A24.1 Method	46
	A24.2 Basis of Acceptability	47
A25	Kapok Displacement Test	47
	A25.1 Method	47
	A25.2 Basis of Acceptability	48
A26	Kapok Weight Test	51
	A26.1 Method	51
	A26.2 Basis of Acceptability	51
A27	Kapok Insert Envelope Seam Strength Test.....	51
	A27.1 Method	51
	A27.2 Basis of Acceptability	52
A28	Rescue Harness 730 Pound Shoulder Strength Test.....	52
	A28.1 Method	52
	A28.2 Basis of Acceptability	52

ANNEX B (Informative) Elements of a Quality Management System

B1	Quality Control – General	53
B2	Control of Records	53
B3	Management Responsibility	53
B4	Management Review	54
B5	Purchasing Information	54
B6	Production and Service Provision.....	55
B7	Control of Production and Service Provision.....	55
B8	Identification and Traceability.....	55
B9	Preservation of Product – Handling, Storage, Packaging, Preservation and Delivery.....	55
B10	Calibration of Measurement Devices and Testing Equipment.....	56
B11	Monitoring and Measurement.....	56
B12	Feedback and Customer Satisfaction	56
B13	Internal Audit	56
B14	Receiving Inspection and Testing	57
B15	In-Process Inspection and Testing	57
B16	Final Inspection and Testing.....	57
B17	Inspection and Test Records	57
B18	Inspection and Test Status	57
B19	Control of Nonconforming Product.....	58
B20	Review and Disposition of Nonconforming Product.....	58
B21	Analysis of Data	58
B22	Corrective Action.....	58

ANNEX C (Normative) Factory Test Equipment

C1	General.....	60
C2	Calibration.....	60
C3	Equipment Specifications	60

No Text on This Page

Preface

This is the First Edition of ANSI/CAN/UL 9595 Standard for Factory Follow-Up on Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs).

ULSE is accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) as a Standards Development Organization (SDO).

This Standard has been developed in compliance with the requirements of ANSI and SCC for accreditation of a Standards Development Organization.

This ANSI/CAN/UL 9595 Standard is under continuous maintenance, whereby each revision is approved in compliance with the requirements of ANSI and SCC for accreditation of a Standards Development Organization. In the event that no revisions are issued for a period of four years from the date of publication, action to revise, reaffirm, or withdraw the standard shall be initiated.

In Canada, there are two official languages, English and French. All safety warnings must be in French and English. Attention is drawn to the possibility that some Canadian authorities may require additional markings and/or installation instructions to be in both official languages.

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This Edition of the Standard has been formally approved by the Technical Committee (TC) for Personal Flotation Devices, TC 1123.

This list represents the TC 1123 membership when the final text in this standard was balloted. Since that time, changes in the membership may have occurred.

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This Standard is intended to be used for conformity assessment.

The intended primary application of this standard is stated in its scope. It is important to note that it remains the responsibility of the user of the standard to judge its suitability for this particular application.

CETTE NORME NATIONALE DU CANADA EST DISPONIBLE EN VERSIONS FRANÇAISE ET ANGLAISE

INTRODUCTION

1 Scope

This standard covers the basic elements of a production Inspection Program for various types of personal flotation devices.

2 Normative References

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this standard. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 9001, *Quality management systems – Requirements*

ISO 17025, *General requirements for the competence testing and calibration laboratories*

ISO/IEC 17020, *Conformity assessment – Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection*

ISO/IEC 17065, *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services*

3 Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of this standard, the following definitions apply.

3.1 APPLICANT – The entity who retains the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the Certified product meets the requirements of the Follow-Up Document.

3.2 APPROVAL – Formal acknowledgement, by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), that a product meets the relevant regulatory requirements.

3.3 CERTIFICATION – A process of product evaluation to:

- a) Determine conformance of a product with a nationally recognized safety standard;
- b) Provide for application of a Certification Mark to those products which conform to the standard; and
- c) Provide for audit of an Applicant and/or Factory's quality management system, all under terms of an agreement(s) signed by the Applicant and the Certification and/or Inspection Body.

3.4 CERTIFICATION BODY – A body, acceptable to the AHJ, which determines, by means of product evaluation and review of the Applicant and/or Factory's quality assurance measures, that the product is eligible for the use of the Certification Mark.

3.5 CERTIFICATION MARK – A distinctive registered mark of a Certification Body that the Applicant, by the terms of the Certification Body, is authorized to apply to the product as a declaration that the product has been manufactured under the Follow-Up Program and complies with the requirements of the program.

3.6 CERTIFIED – Describes a product found to be in compliance with the appropriate standards and eligible for coverage under the Certification Program.

3.7 CRITICAL DIMENSIONS – Those dimensions identified in the Follow-Up Document that directly affect the performance characteristics of the product.

3.8 FACTORY – The physical location where production, complete or partial, of Certified product takes place.

3.9 FOLLOW-UP DOCUMENT – A document describing the Certified product and essential elements of the Follow-Up Program, prepared by the Certification Body and utilized by the Applicant and/or Factory and/or Inspection Body while the Certification is in effect.

3.10 FOLLOW-UP PROGRAM – The sampling, inspections, tests, or other measures taken by the Applicant and/or Factory and supplemented by the Certification and/or Inspection Body as a check on the means that the Applicant and/or Factory exercises to determine compliance of Certified products with the requirements. Such activities are generally conducted at a Factory or off-site location where related activities occur. Examination and testing may also be conducted by the Certification and/or Inspection Body on samples selected from the factory.

3.11 INITIAL PRODUCTION INSPECTION (IPI) – Inspection of the first production run of a representative product type to ensure that Applicant and/or Factory of a product are producing the product in accordance with the requirements in the Follow-Up Document.

3.12 INSPECTION BODY – A body that validates that the Applicant and/or Factory has performed all necessary examinations, tests and inspections to determine compliance of the Certified product with the requirements specified in the Follow-Up Document.

3.13 PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE (PFD) – Lifesaving or safety device intended to protect the user from drowning, including the following:

- a) COMMERCIAL PFD – PFD intended to meet the carriage requirements for commercial vessels not subject to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS);
- b) RECREATIONAL PFD – PFD intended to meet the carriage requirements for recreational vessels;
- c) SOLAS PFD – PFD intended to meet the carriage requirements for vessels subject to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS).
- d) THROWABLE PFD – PFD intended to be thrown; and
- e) WEARABLE PFD – PFD intended to be worn on the body;

3.14 SPLIT INSPECTION – Inspection of a PFD partially manufactured at one or more Factories and shipped to another Factory to complete construction.

4 General Requirements

4.1 For each Certified Personal Flotation Device, the Certification Body shall establish a Follow-Up Program complying with the minimum requirements contained in this standard. Other methods or alternative means of control considered equivalent shall conform to the same minimum standard for a Certification Program and shall be authorized by the Certification and Inspection Body and documented in the Follow-Up Document.

4.2 An Applicant participating in the Certification and Inspection Program shall be required to sign a legally binding agreement with a Certification and/or Inspection Body. Such an agreement shall provide for those elements, duties, and responsibilities necessary for compliance with this standard.

4.3 The Certification and/or Inspection Body shall determine, by means of an Initial Production Inspection (IPI) and review of the Applicant's quality assurance measures, including competent staff and necessary equipment, that the Factory is eligible for coverage under a Certification Program.

4.4 An IPI shall be required for any production by a new Applicant or new Factory, or when the new PFD product does not use the same or similar aspects of production as existing production.

4.5 The IPI shall consist of witnessing the performance of all testing procedures required for Factory testing by the employees that will normally be performing said tests, and verification the Applicant and/or Factory has:

- a) Equipment/area necessary to perform required Factory testing.
- b) Calibration program and calibration records of equipment are traceable to appropriate National Standards and comply with section [6.3](#) of this standard.
- c) Records to demonstrate that the employees are competent to perform required Factory testing.
- d) Knowledge of minimum requirements for follow-up documents.
- e) Record keeping and documentation of procedures.
- f) A quality management system in place, noting the length of time the quality management system has been in place with documentation, which includes:
 - 1) Incoming inspections and/or Supplier verification,
 - 2) Segregation of non-conforming product/components, and
 - 3) Procedures for disposition of non-conforming items.

4.6 The IPI may be waived/modified by the Certification Body if an IPI was previously conducted for that applicant and factory location that covered the same or similar aspects of production.

4.7 The Certification and/or Inspection Body shall witness, as applicable, all necessary examinations, tests, and inspections to determine compliance of randomly selected samples of the Certified product with the requirements specified in the Follow-Up Document. Samples shall be selected from production intended to bear the Certification Mark, finished products at the Applicant's factory bearing the Certification Mark, and may also include products that bear the Certification Mark that have been purchased on the open market. Records of factory tests and product examinations conducted between Factory Follow-Up audits shall also be audited for compliance.

4.8 The Certification and/or Inspection Body shall have the right to conduct unannounced inspections/audits at the factory, and to control Certification Marks, including the right to require that the Applicant remove a Mark from a product that does not comply with the requirements or place a product on hold pending rework or review by the AHJ.

4.9 The Applicant shall agree to have the product investigated by the Certification Body to determine compliance with changes in standards or shall agree to discontinue application of the Certification Mark when such changes become effective, or hold and revise the product to bring it into compliance with the new standard.

4.10 Each component shall be used in accordance with its certification rating and other limitations for use. Where components are not covered by a separate Follow-Up Program, the Applicant is responsible for ensuring that all relevant requirements are met.

5 Responsibilities of Certification and Inspection Bodies

5.1 General

5.1.1 Certification and Inspection Bodies shall be recognized by the AHJ as:

- a) Being engaged, as a regular part of its business, in performing inspections and tests that are the same as or similar to the inspections and tests required for the product being considered for Certification or witnessed to perform representative tests successfully;
- b) Having, or having access to, the equipment, facilities, personnel, and calibrated instruments that are necessary to inspect and test the products under the Certification Program;
- c) Not being owned or controlled by:
 - 1) An Applicant, vendor, or buyer of the products to be inspected or tested, or by an Applicant of similar products, or
 - 2) A supplier of materials to the Applicant and/or Factory.
- d) Being responsible for the impartiality of its Certification activities and shall not allow commercial, financial or other pressures to compromise impartiality. This shall not prohibit the Certification Body from consulting with an Applicant in setting up appropriate quality and record-keeping systems or compliance review of products throughout their design process;
- e) Not advertising, promoting, or designing any Applicant's product or performing consulting work for any Applicant or Factory for products covered under the Follow-Up Program that could impair impartiality of the Follow-Up Program;
- f) Not contracting or transferring to another person or organization responsibility for the supervision of inspections or tests required under the Certification Program, unless the originating Certification Body maintains oversight and accountability for a third party Inspection Body via a written contractual agreement;
- g) Providing a mechanism for appealing decisions of the Certification and Inspection Body to a panel of independent experts composed of three members, one each from industry, testing laboratories, and regulatory agencies, chosen on a rotating basis with the final appeal to be presented to the AHJ;
- h) Maintaining independent accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020 or ISO/IEC 17065, or other standards deemed equivalent by the AHJ.

5.1.2 The Certification and/or Inspection Body shall permit the use of a Certification Mark only on products that comply with all of the requirements of the Follow-Up Program and are also bearing the Approval Number of the AHJ. The Certification Mark shall be owned and controlled by the Certification Body, used exclusively to identify products as being Certified, and be Federally registered as a Certification Mark with the relevant agency (e.g. U. S. Patent and Trademark Office under the Trademark Act of 1946, commonly referred to as the Lanham Act (15 U.S.C. 1051 et. seq.) in the US, or the Canadian Intellectual Property Office under the Trade-marks Act (R.S.C. 1985, c. T-13) in Canada).

5.1.3 The Certification Body shall prepare a Follow-Up Document that conforms to this standard. The Follow-Up Document shall identify, describe, and set forth requirements for the continuation of the certification of the product and shall specify the authorized Certification Mark that shall be used only on the product and includes:

- a) Photographs, drawings, text, or other means to the extent necessary to accurately describe all important features of the Certified product.

b) A list of critical dimensions subject to Sections [5.3.4](#).

c) In addition to those requirements in Section [6.5](#), when the Certification Body determines that additional tests shall be performed either at the Factory or Inspection Body's facility, detailed information describing the specific tests, including frequency, shall be documented by the Certification Body.

5.1.4 The Inspection Body shall complete a report at the time of each inspection and shall record an audit of the Applicant's and/or Factory's data sheets from both the ongoing inspection visit and samples of Applicant's and/or Factory's data sheets from production since the last inspection visit. The inspection report shall include at least the following information:

- a) Date of inspection;
- b) Inspector's name and Inspection Body's name;
- c) Factory address;
- d) Representative of the Applicant's name, phone number, and email address;
- e) Follow-up document identification number;
- f) Identification of the PFD product(s) inspected;
- g) Nature of Inspection (i.e. regular inspection, audit inspection, etc.);
- h) Quantity of Certification Marks used since last visit;
- i) Description of non-compliances and corrective actions, if any, determined during the Inspection;
- j) Identification of samples being sent to the Certification Body, if required; and
- k) The inspection result and a statement of conformity where applicable.

5.1.5 If the production samples are not in compliance with the requirements, the Certification and/or Inspection Body shall require the Applicant, before shipping, to:

- a) Remove all markings referencing certification, inspection or approval from the product; or
- b) Rework all products to comply with the requirements of the standard; or
- c) Abide by the decision of the Certification or Inspection Body and/or the AHJ with regards to temporary acceptance of the non-compliant product.

5.1.6 For a split inspection, the Certification Body shall include in the Follow-Up Document each Factory's specific responsibilities to maintain traceability of components and the level of compliance directly related to that Factory's operations. In addition, the Follow-Up Document shall specify the split inspection identification related to the PFD subassembly and/or components.

5.2 Assignment of a Process Rating

5.2.1 The Certification Body shall assign each Applicant/Factory combination a Process Rating, as shown in [Table 5.1](#). The Certification Body shall assign a Process Rating when an Applicant/Factory combination first starts production of PFDs for which an approved Follow-Up Service program is required. Each new Applicant/Factory combination shall initially be assigned to Process Rating C or Process Rating B upon assessment by the Certification and/or Inspection Body. A sample program is attached; see Annex [B](#) – Elements of a Quality Management System.

5.2.2 Process Rating A shall be assigned to an Applicant/Factory combination that has demonstrated a superior quality management system.

5.2.3 Process Rating B shall be assigned to an Applicant/Factory combination with a good quality management system.

5.2.4 Process Rating C shall be assigned to an Applicant/Factory combination with minimally compliant quality management system or a quality management system that has not previously been rated.

Table 5.1
Assignment of a Process Rating

Required Quality Elements	Process Rating		
	Process Rating C	Process Rating B	Process Rating A
Quality Management System (QMS)	QMS that meets minimum requirements of this Standard.	QMS defined by Applicant/Factory, which includes a Quality Manual that incorporates this Standard's requirements but is not approved by a 3rd party.	QMS recognized by the Certification as meeting ISO 9001, or a comparable quality standard, either by audits or acceptance of a 3rd party registration.
Control of Suppliers & Subcontractors	As needed for maintaining traceability records	Documented process for evaluation, selection and control	Documented process for evaluation, selection, and control that is accredited under the QMS.
Testing & Documentation	Able to perform & document Applicant and/or Factory's tests on end products.	Conducts & documents in-process QC inspection and tests and as a result is able to perform a reduced number of end product tests.	Conducts & documents in-process QC inspection and tests and as a result is able to perform minimal end product tests. Able to perform all tests as prescribed in this Standard.
Experience	None	1-year performing at Process Rating B while assigned Process Rating C	1-year performing at Process Rating A while assigned Process Rating B or C

5.2.5 The process rating shall be re-evaluated at least on an annual basis, when the Certification and/or Inspection Body determines that the Applicant and/or Factory has failed to meet the criteria of [Table 5.1](#), or at the request of the Applicant and/or Factory.

5.2.6 If an Applicant and/or Factory is found to not be satisfactorily maintaining their QMS during an external audit, their process rating will be reassigned based on [Table 5.1](#).

5.3 Elements of the Follow-Up Program

5.3.1 General

5.3.1.1 The Certification and/or Inspection Body's Countercheck Program, described in [5.3.7](#), at the Factory shall comply with the minimum requirements for the applicable Process Rating.

5.3.2 Inspection Frequency

5.3.2.1 Frequency of inspections shall be established in proportion to the production of PFDs bearing the Certification Mark and Process Rating. If an Applicant/Factory declares that a Factory is inactive and there has been no inspection in the current calendar year, the Certification and/or Inspection Body shall conduct one unannounced inspection per year to assure no production is occurring.

5.3.2.2 Product inspection audits shall be based on production in accordance with [Table 5.2](#).

Table 5.2
Inspection Frequency

Wearable & Throwable Recreational PFDs – Inherent Buoyancy ONLY	
Process Rating C	1 inspection per 25,000 PFDs. Or, if 25,000 PFDs are not likely to be made, the minimum inspection visit frequency shall be 1 per quarter in which Certified Product is made.
Process Rating B	1 inspection per 50,000 PFDs. Or, if 50,000 PFDs are not likely to be made, the minimum inspection frequency shall be 1 per quarter in which Certified Product is made.
Process Rating A	Regardless of volume, Inspection audits shall be no less than semi-annually and may alternate between product inspection audits and quality system audits.

Wearable & Throwable Recreational PFDs – Inflatable or Combined Buoyancy Media	
Process Rating C	1 inspection per 5,000 PFDs Or, if 5,000 PFDs are not likely to be made, the minimum inspection visit frequency shall be 1 per quarter in which Certified Product is made.
Process Rating B	1 inspection per 10,000 PFDs. Or, if 10,000 PFDs are not likely to be made, the minimum inspection frequency shall be 1 per quarter in which Certified Product is made.
Process Rating A	Regardless of volume, Inspection audits shall be no less than semi-annually and may alternate between product inspection audits and quality system audits.

Wearable & Throwable Commercial PFDs	
Process Rating C	1 inspection per 1,000 PFDs. Or, if 1,000 PFDs are not likely to be made, the minimum inspection visit frequency shall be 1 per quarter in which Certified Product is made.
Process Rating B	1 inspection per 2,000 PFDs. Or, if 2,000 PFDs are not likely to be made, the minimum inspection frequency shall be 1 per quarter in which Certified Product is made.
Process Rating A	1 inspection per 5000. Or, if 5,000 PFDs are not likely to be made, the minimum inspection visit frequency shall be no less than semi-annually and may alternate between product inspections audits and quality system audits.

5.3.2.3 The Certification and/or Inspection Body shall increase the inspection frequency if, in its judgment, the increased frequency is necessary to audit the control over the product that will bear the Certification Mark. The basis for increased inspection frequency shall include the inability of the product to successfully complete the minimum Applicant and/or Factory's control program, inspector's countercheck program at factory, laboratory tests on the products and any other indication that the Certification Mark is being misused or misapplied.

5.3.2.4 Where an Applicant/Factory is assigned a Process Rating A, quality system audits may be self-reported, provided that the Certification and/or Inspection Body has visited the factory location within the last six months, and no critical QMS non-conformities have been reported.

5.3.3 Verification/ Traceability of Components

5.3.3.1 At each inspection, the inspector shall review the Applicant and/or Factory's records to determine compliance with requirements.

5.3.3.2 The inspector shall select samples of each part or subassembly to be examined.

5.3.4 Critical Dimensions Verification

5.3.4.1 Critical dimensions are those that directly affect the performance characteristics of the product, and should be documented in the Follow-Up Document.

5.3.4.2 The critical dimensions, such as foam and fabric cutting patterns, seal allowances, seam widths, etc., shall be verified against the approved illustrations at each inspection. The Certification and/or Inspection Body representative shall witness factory personnel verifying general design, location of webbings, closures, etc., to determine they are as shown on the illustrations.

5.3.5 Visual Inspection of Completed PFDs

5.3.5.1 At each inspection, the inspector shall examine randomly selected PFDs, and determine that the completed PFDs are of quality workmanship, by verifying that they:

- a) Are in compliance with the Follow-Up Document;
- b) Are free from defects that would impair the performance of the PFD; and
- c) Are properly marked in accordance with the Certification Mark and any other markings or attached consumer information required by the AHJ.

5.3.6 Review of Records

5.3.6.1 The inspector shall review the Applicant and/ or Factory's test records to verify that tests have been conducted as required and that the necessary information is recorded, and that only product that is in compliance has been shipped.

5.3.6.2 The inspector shall verify the records required by Section [6.2](#).

5.3.7 Certification and/or Inspection Body Countercheck Tests

5.3.7.1 The Inspector shall witness a sampling of tests in sufficient quantity to establish confidence in the Applicant and/or Factory's ability to perform testing as specified in the Follow-Up Document. At a minimum, the buoyancy test and one strength test shall be witnessed annually. The type of strength test witnessed shall vary in order to assure all strength tests are witnessed. All tests shall be conducted in accordance with the test methods in the Sections indicated, unless otherwise specified in the Follow-Up Document.

5.3.7.2 Where a model is provided in "infant" size, samples shall be selected and sent to the Certification and/or Inspection Body's laboratory for testing as described in Section [5.3.8](#).

5.3.7.3 At the discretion of the Certification and/or Inspection Body, additional testing may be required to verify compliance with the applicable product standard(s), the Follow-Up Document, and this standard.

5.3.8 Flotation Stability Test

5.3.8.1 Once per year, the Inspector shall randomly select one complete device of each "infant" size, style, and model of PFD.

5.3.8.2 Unless otherwise specified, the Applicant and/or Factory shall forward the selected sample to the test laboratory for the Flotation Stability Test.