

ABYC Project Technical Committee Report  
Product Interface PTC  
Baltimore, Maryland  
April 1-2, 2008

Highlights from the ABYC Product Interface Project Technical Committee meeting:

1. Action items:
  - The Hull Performance PTC has not acted on any capsizing issues but has looked at Wiley Labs capsizing reports and felt that the research is still relevant. The HP PTC will not look into capsizing any further.
  - The Labels Project will remain in this PTC. Goal is to produce universal warning labels for the industry.
  
2. A-33, Emergency Engine Cutoff Devices.
  - This standard is a guide for the design, construction, installation and performance of methods used to disable propulsion when the operator and/or occupants are unexpectedly displaced within or from the boat.
  - The standard will also apply to lanyards for occupants.
  - This standard is not a requirement to use the lanyards, which may be in CG regulations. The standard covers design, construction installation and performance of lanyards.
  - The standard is not equipment-specific and addresses both mechanical and wireless lanyards.
  - The emergency engine cut-off is a switch or other system that provides a means to disable propulsion.
  - Factors to consider to minimize inadvertent operation such as mounting location, reducing tangles, etc, will be listed in an informative annex. This annex also contains information to be placed in the owners manual addressing the effects of disabling propulsion.
  - Audible alarms shall be heard at all helm positions. The alarm shall have a mute feature.
  - The standard accommodates boats with multiple helm stations and multiple lanyard stations.
  - Mechanical and wireless systems may be used separately or in combination.
  - Added a thermal conditioning cycle, a salt fog and a UV test for the lanyard device and switches. The lanyards shall then be tested 8 times to verify proper operation.
  - Wireless devices shall be attached to the person or PFD with a pull test of >5 pounds.
  - Wireless devices shall have at least two methods to disable propulsion. One must be a manual means attached to the operator and one must be automatic.
  - Switches shall be labeled according to E-11.
  - Next Action: Due to the number of changes made to this standard, it will be sent out again for review and consensus ballot.
  
3. Occupant Protection Subcommittee
  - Bass boat builders had previously decided that seat positions needed designation, thus created the NMMA seating labels.
  - Jet boats use seating labels as per the ABYC standards.
  - Questions arise about seating positions versus designated occupant positions. Are seat labels a solution?
  - Next action: The S/C was charged with first determining the problem, the means that people are ejected from the boat. Might be due to just stupid activities that are governed by state laws.
  - The S/C also looked at seat cushions. Looked at seating design, construction and materials. Areas of concern are thickness of seat cushions, height of seat backs and radius of seats. The S/C found closed cell foam tested better than open cell foam.
  - There is no simple formula for choosing the right foam – density, compression, comfort and cost are all to be factored. (From Marine Textile magazine)
  - Next action: Continue tests of foam and develop a test protocol. The S/C needs to determine use of this information to assist the industry.

4. Ladder Subcommittee Report.
  - In the rewrite of H-41, the S/C will look at proximity of ladders to exhausts and proximity of ladders to propellers.
  - Will also look at ladder interlocks and engine shutdowns.
  - Next action: Recommended revisions to H-41 will be completed in 60 days.
  
6. Perception Response Time
  - Work Group looked at a number of studies dealing with operator stressors, not on operator response times.
  - Response timer not available from Boston Whaler; may be other timers available from the auto industry. Cost about \$5k. Funds may be available from the CG to build a timer to be used at boat shows to determine operator response times.
  
7. Ergonomics Subcommittee
  - Looking at the items of T-26 that applies to different standards. Ergonomic topics are to be sent to H-31, Seat Structures, all the Steering standards, P-14, Propulsion Control Systems, and H-1, Field of Vision.
  - This PTC will develop comments to be sent to other PTCs to be considered in their next standard review cycle.
  
8. New Business
  - CED, the CG contractors for prop guard analysis, gave a presentation on their work to date. Their work consists of defining the human factors in prop accidents, creating an electronic library of accidents, and developing evaluation criteria for prop guards and other prop strike mitigating devices.
  - NFPA 302 recently held a revisions meeting at UL headquarters. ABYC did not want 302 to address CO or at least follow to ABYC standards, and this initiative was successful as 302 now follows ABYC.
  - NASBLA has reorganized their committees and are focusing on accident data analysis. Looking at non compliance of carriage requirements. Special risks will include paddle sports, small boats and young boaters under 17 years. Next meeting in Clearwater, FL.
  - Jim Getz gave an overview of the NASBLA collision program and its partners. The committee viewed several boat collision videos and discussed the accident investigation protocol.
  
9. Next meeting is scheduled for September 11-12, 2008. Location may be associated with the NASBLA meeting in Clearwater but more likely held here in Baltimore due to meeting expenses.

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