

NAFLIC

National Association For Leisure Industry Certification

Standards & Related Documents Committee

TECHNICAL BULLETIN - NOVEMBER 1992

042. Anchorage of Inflatables

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For those of you who have not yet seen it we append a story, from the Daily Mail of 17 November 1992, about an incident which occurred in Australia. The article clearly highlights the consequences of poor or absent anchorage.

We have also been surprised to hear from a NAFLIC member that a manufacturer of Inflatables recently told him that he had not heard of the HSE Guidance Note covering his product.

Ideally, in our view, he should have issued a copy with every inflatable sold.

We also consider it inadvisable for any operator of Inflatables to do so without having a copy of this guidance, and we recommend Appointed Persons who examine these devices to consider this point. The reference number of the relevant Guidance Note, which may be obtained from HMSO, is PM76.

From the Daily Mail, Tuesday 17 November 1992 :-

“Children's flyaway terror, trapped on castle in the air

A BOUNCING castle with five children aboard took off in a freak gust of wind.

The terrified youngsters huddled inside the giant inflatable as a rescuer hung on for dear life to one of the anchor ropes. Ricky McCasker could feel his grip weakening as he dropped them, one by one, to safety.

But when he finally plunged to earth he found he was being hailed as a hero.

Mr McCasker, 31, had spotted that the inflatable was about to break free from its ropes at the fairground outside Melbourne and scrambled aboard to rescue the children playing inside. 'I reached in and started grabbing kids with one hand while hanging onto a rope with the other,' he said yesterday. Suddenly the whole thing soared upwards.

I was terrified and so were the little kids inside. I shouted to them to keep calm and I would make sure they were all right.' He went on: I had a choice of keeping them in the inflatable and perhaps being carried miles to our deaths, or trying to drop them onto grass. I managed to drop four of them, but it was pretty difficult. There was still a little girl left inside when I saw we were being swept towards the Big Wheel.

We were about to clip the top of it when I managed to kick the castle away. A few seconds later we were clear and I tried to drop the girl onto the grass. 'I missed, and she hit the concrete. My heart was in my mouth when I saw that happen.' By now Mr McCasker was feeling dizzy. "The next minute I was plunging downwards' he recalled. "I prared I wasn't going to hit the concrete, but as it was I crashed through the canvas roof of the dodgem car ride.

The girl broke her arm, but he and the other youngsters escaped with minor injuries. 'I'd always wondered what it was like to be able to fly,' said Mr McCasker. 'Now I know, and I don't like it!'