

Proposed changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation include clarifications on personal flotation devices.

# Proposed regulatory changes to blasting and commercial fishing

By Lynn Welburn

WorkSafeBC's Policy, Regulation and Research Division is seeking feedback on proposed amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

The consultation phase runs until Friday, June 1, 2018, and offers stakeholders a chance to provide feedback before the proposed amendments go to a public hearing in the fall of 2018. Under review, are two regulatory-amendment packages, including multiple sections of Part 21, Blasting Operations, as well as new sections of Part 24, Diving, Fishing and Other Marine Operations.

## What are the proposed amendments for blasting operations?

Proposed amendments to Part 21 include updated definitions to reflect technological and product innovations not currently addressed in the Regulation, such as the safe use of electronic detonators.

### Blasting operations

Proposed changes to Part 21 add new terminology in Section 21.1, such as “electric detonator,” “electric

igniter,” “electronic detonator,” “initiating device,” and “radio frequency transmitter.” Electronic detonators are relatively new technologies, and they are less susceptible to premature detonation from sources, such as stray current and radio-frequency energy, than previous technologies. The intent of the change is to recognize new technology and clarify to the blasting requirements in Part 21, including misfire wait periods for these new systems. There are also proposed changes to the definitions for “misfire” and “shunt”, to provide additional clarity to the blasting requirements.

### Electrical initiation

Section 21.58 proposes to extend current precautions to be taken to prevent the premature detonation of electric detonators from sources of electricity, to include newer electronic detonators and electric igniters. It will also change the term “detonation” to “initiation” to better reflect the broader range of products that are currently being used.

### Returning to the blast site

There are a variety of term and definition changes proposed in Sections 21.71 to 21.73, to bring them into line with new materials being used. As well, the

proposed amendments set out new misfire periods for different types of systems.

## What are the proposed amendments for diving, fishing, and other marine operations?

Proposed changes to Part 24 bring regulations in sync with international safety requirements and create more specific and consistent regulations with regard to personal safety gear.

### Fishing operations

Proposed changes to Part 24 require workers on fishing vessels to wear a personal flotation device or lifejacket even when the vessel has a guardrail. Workers in the commercial fishing industry are at risk of drowning even when the vessel has a guardrail since vessels can pitch, heave, roll over or sink with little or no warning. Amendments to definitions in Section 24.1 for such terms as “lifejacket,” “personal flotation device,” and “working alone” are proposed to provide specific requirements for the use of these devices for

the industry and bring standards into line with federal regulations.

### Personal flotation devices (PFDs) and lifejackets

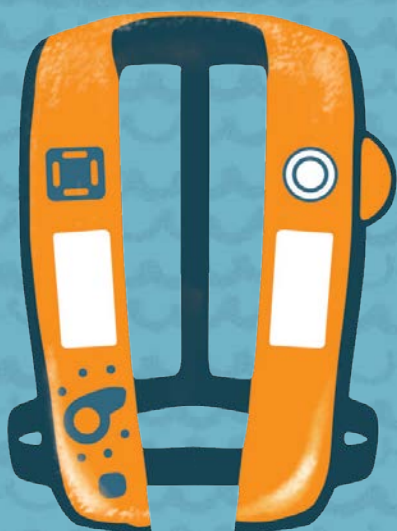
These proposed changes will apply to commercial fishing vessels. In Sections 24.69 to 24.96, changes will set out all the instances when PFDs, lifejackets, and other such devices must be worn. The changes will also cover the standards that the devices must meet and the requirements for inspection and maintenance.

## Where can I get more information on these proposed changes?

Full details on all proposed regulatory changes can be found by searching for “proposed regulatory amendments” on [worksafebc.com](http://worksafebc.com).

### What happens next?

If you miss your chance to submit your changes by June 1, these changes will come up for a public hearing in the fall of 2018. The date of the hearing will be posted on the Public Hearings and Consultations page of [worksafebc.com](http://worksafebc.com). ☺



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