August 1975 B75-10166

NASA TECH BRIEF

Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center

Highly-Visible Air-Sea Rescue Marker

The problem:

Modern aircraft and ships carry sea dye markers to assist rescue teams during emergencies. If a disaster occurs, the survivors at sea release these dyes into the water to make the area visible to rescue aircraft. The dyes, however, are not very effective because they dissipate very rapidly in choppy waters.

The solution:

A more permanent sea marker can be made from sheets of polyolefin material. This material is coated with a bright dye and is effective even in choppy water.

How it's done:

Commercial polyolefins such as polyethylene and polypropylene can be used for the sheets. Both have a lower specific gravity than seawater and therefore float on the surface. They can be made either as a continuous film or as fibrous materials. Other low-density materials can also be used.

The material is coated with a bright fluorescent pigment or dye. Suitable colors include bright red and orange shades such as those worn by highway maintenance crews. An inflatable polyethylene tube is attached to the periphery of the material. The material is folded into a compact package which is easily opened. Once in the water, the tube can be inflated to spread the material to its maximum dimensions, forming a highly-visible, long lasting, rescue panel.

Note:

No further documentation is available. Specific questions, may be directed to:

Technology Utilization Officer
Johnson Space Center
Code AT3
Houston, Texas 77058
Reference: B75-10166

Patent status:

Inquiries concerning rights for the commercial use of this invention should be addressed to:

Patent Counsel
Johnson Space Center
Code AM
Houston, Texas 77058

Source: M. I. Radnofsky and J. Naimer
Johnson Space Center
(MSC-12564)

Categories: 05 (Life Sciences)
04 (Materials)
07 (Machinery)