

## [No, Esther McVey, the benefits rape clause is not “extra help” for women](#)

I thought I'd heard it all from the UK government on the pernicious rape clause. It's now a year since it came into force, and almost three since it was announced in the July Budget of 2015. But Esther McVey, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, proved me wrong. Giving evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Social Security Committee, McVey called the rape clause “extra help”, “an opportunity to talk” and “double support”. It is none of these things.

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## [Press release: New Director General of the Propriety and Ethics Team: Helen MacNamara](#)

The Cabinet Secretary, with the approval of the Prime Minister, has today announced that Helen MacNamara, currently the Director General for Housing in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, will be appointed to the role of Director General, Propriety and Ethics Team in the Cabinet Office.

The role oversees the provision of advice to all government departments on standards and ethics issues, corporate governance in public bodies, and manages public appointments. The purpose of the role is to ensure the highest standards of propriety, integrity and governance within government.

Helen will take on the role in May when Sue Gray, the current Director General for the Propriety and Ethics Team, moves to the Northern Ireland Civil Service to begin her role as Permanent Secretary.

Speaking about the appointment, Sir Jeremy Heywood, the Cabinet Secretary said:

I am delighted to announce Helen's appointment to the role of Director General of the Propriety and Ethics Team. She is a highly

experienced civil servant who has worked in many senior roles across government. Her appointment will bring a wealth of knowledge and understanding of how government works, that will assist her in this crucial role.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sue Gray for her outstanding contribution. She has shown extraordinary commitment and integrity in this challenging role. She has earned huge respect and admiration across government for her wise counsel, strong leadership and excellent judgement. I wish her all the best in her next position.

Helen MacNamara said:

I am delighted to be returning to the Cabinet Office to take on this important role. I'm looking forward to building on the excellent work of Sue Gray, and supporting the Prime Minister and Cabinet Secretary in upholding the highest standards of integrity and propriety within government.

This appointment has been agreed by the Prime Minister, and follows an extensive recruitment competition.

Helen MacNamara has been Director General, Housing in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government since July 2016.

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## **[A year on from election call, a weak Theresa May is still letting Scotland down](#)**

Today marks a year since Theresa May made her ill-fated decision to call a General Election in an attempt to 'strengthen her hand'.

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# Safety Alert – Cylinders manufactured from aluminium alloys HE30/AA6082 and AA6351 and used primarily for gases for underwater breathing apparatus

## Health and Safety Executive – Safety Alert

**Department Name:** Energy Division

**Bulletin No:** ED 1-2018

**Issue Date:** 8th March 2018

**Target Audience:** SCUBA diving, those that supply breathing air through an umbilical hose and those used to fill SCUBA cylinders.

**Key Issues:** Cylinders to be inspected and tested include those used for SCUBA diving, those that supply breathing air through an umbilical hose and those used to fill SCUBA cylinders.

There have been several recent catastrophic failures of aluminium cylinders used primarily to contain gases for underwater breathing apparatus and manufactured from aluminium alloys HE30/AA6082 and AA6351. These cylinders should only be used if they have undergone thorough visual inspection and testing with an eddy-current device by a competent inspector (see inspection and testing requirements below).

**Failure to conduct such inspection and testing could result in serious harm.**

Cylinders to be inspected and tested include those used for SCUBA diving, those that supply breathing air through an umbilical hose and those used to fill SCUBA cylinders.

If you are unable to determine whether a particular cylinder is made from one of these alloys, remove it from service, safely release the gas and do not use it until the alloy can be identified and proper inspection and testing can be conducted.

- Cylinders that cannot be identified from markings on the cylinder must be removed from service, condemned and rendered incapable of holding pressure.
- Cylinders that fail visual inspection or eddy-current testing must be condemned and rendered incapable of holding pressure.

## Background

Serious harm was caused by failure of an HE30/AA6082 cylinder in England in 2017, which followed similarly harmful failures of AA6351 SCUBA cylinders in Indonesia and Australia in 2016. Cylinders manufactured from these alloys are known to be susceptible to sustained-load cracking (SLC). These cylinders were manufactured by several companies in several countries between 1963 and 1995. Thus, any cylinders still in use are between 23 and 55 years old.

Luxfer Gas Cylinders manufactured HE30/AA6082 and AA6351 cylinders in England and AA6351 cylinders in the USA and Australia. Walter Kidde Company in the USA, CIG Gas Cylinders in Australia (acquired by Luxfer Gas Cylinders in 1997) and Reynolds Tube Company Ltd (later known as TI Hollow Extrusions) in England also manufactured cylinders from these alloys.

## **Inspection and testing requirements for cylinders manufactured from HE30/AA6082 and AA6351 and used primarily for underwater breathing apparatus**

Cylinders used at work or filled by a person at work—including SCUBA cylinders, cylinders that supply breathing air through an umbilical hose and cylinders used primarily to fill SCUBA cylinders—must be suitably inspected and tested to ensure that they are safe. Inspection frequency must be in line with requirements of BS EN 1802 for “Gases for underwater breathing apparatus”. It is also recommended that cylinders not used or filled at work be subject to similar inspections and tests.

An eddy-current test must be conducted in addition to the required visual inspection. This test shall be conducted by a competent and qualified cylinder inspector who has been trained in the specific use of eddy-current testing equipment.

**If a cylinder is equipped with a thread adaptor, the adaptor must be removed prior to visual inspection and eddy-current testing.**

It should be noted that Luxfer Gas Cylinders currently only approves two eddy-current devices for such testing: Visual Plus™ and Visual Eddy™.

The relevant standard describing inspection requirements for aluminium cylinders containing gases for underwater breathing apparatus is BS EN 1802 (due to be replaced by BS EN ISO 18119). This standard requires that inspection and testing be carried out by a competent person. Although there is no unique legal definition of competence for cylinder testing, HSE considers that the following provide a suitable level of confidence in a cylinder inspector’s competence for this task:

- Appointment by the Secretary of State for Transport for the purposes of inspection of gas cylinders
- Working within the terms of an industry-accredited scheme.

The appointment or accreditation should be for the specific type of cylinder concerned.

## **Actions required**

Check to see if any of your cylinders are manufactured or suspected to be manufactured from aluminium alloys HE30/AA6082 or AA6351. Check for specific alloy-related markings or for a manufacture date (the earliest date stamped on the cylinder) prior to 1995. If you believe that a cylinder may be made from either of these alloys, then you should assess the risk of continued use by considering the cylinder’s age, history of use and previous testing.

If you cannot determine the alloy and appropriate information as described in BS EN 1802–e.g., if you cannot easily read markings on the cylinder or if markings are missing—you must remove the cylinder from service, safely release the gas and render the cylinder incapable of holding pressure.

If you are unable to confirm that eddy-current testing was performed on an HE30/AA6082 or AA6351 cylinder, remove it from service, safely release the gas and do not use the cylinder until eddy-current testing can be performed.

## **Identifying cylinders manufactured from HE30/AA6082 and AA6351 aluminium alloys**

Cylinders stamped with any of the following markings are manufactured from HE30/AA6082 or AA6351:

- HE30
- HOAL 1
- HOAL 2
- HOAL 3
- HOAL 4
- BS5045/3/B
- BS5045/3/B/S
- AA6351
- P\*\*\*\*X (as part of serial number)
- P\*\*\*\*P (as part of serial number)

*Note:* On some small cylinders manufactured at Luxfer's Aldridge, England, plant, the above markings may not be present. In that case, the alloy can be determined from the three-digit type number stamped around the base. If the three-digit number is of the form 1\*\*, 3\*\* or 5\*\*, then the alloy of manufacture is AA6351.

## **Relevant legal documents**

- Health and Safety at Work etc act 1974.
- Diving at Work Regulations 1997 (6)(3)(b).

## **Further information**

### **General note**

Please pass this information to any of your colleagues who may have this product or equipment or may operate this type of system or process.

All cylinders that are transported for the purpose of work must be tested at an approved [Vehicle Certification Agency \(VCA\)](#) test centre.

This alert sheet contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

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## Fatal traffic accident in Sha Tin

Police are investigating a fatal traffic accident in Sha Tin today (April 18) morning in which a 68-year-old man died.

At about 6.05am, a bus driven by a 31-year-old man was travelling along Ngau Pei Sha Street towards Kwong Yuen Estate. When approaching near Sha Tin Wai Road, it reportedly knocked down the 68-year-old male cyclist who was crossing the road.

Sustaining serious head injuries, the 68-year-old man was rushed to Prince of Wales Hospital in unconscious state where he was certified dead at 1.03pm.

The bus driver was arrested for dangerous driving causing death. He was released on bail and is required to report back to Police in mid-May.

Investigation by the Special Investigation Team of Traffic, New Territories South is underway.

Anyone who witnessed the accident or has any information to offer is urged to contact the investigating officers at 3661 1300.