



## Circular 057:19

---

**Date:** Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019

**Subject:** Throttle Return Mechanism Installation

**Attention:** Power craft Officers & Head of Lifesaving/Club Captains

**Action:** Information Sharing

---

Circulars are available at: <http://lifesaving.org.nz/lifesaving/lifesaving-operations-circulars/>

---

### **Background:**

SLSNZ is aware of a number of instances where a driver and crewperson have been dislodged from their IRB resulting in the IRB running freely with the throttle control not returning to idle speed resulting in instances where out of control IRBs have resulted in injury.

### **What is the problem?**

The Mercury 30 engine is not manufactured with an automatic throttle return mechanism, and knowing that injuries can result from out of control IRBs, SLSNZ has a legal obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 to provide an alternative control mechanism, in order to prevent any further risk of injury to our members and to others that may be affected by our IRB operations.

### **What have we done to address the problem?**

SLSNZ has for the past 14 months trialled a range of devices that return the throttle to idle speed when the throttle grip is released. Numerous clubs and IRB drivers have been involved in these trials. Dave Hickey our National Powercraft Officer has kept the Powercraft Advisory Group (PAG) informed of progress. Blind testing of the latest throttle return mechanism confirms that a satisfactory solution has been identified that will have minimal impact on the user.

### **What next?**

Commencing in mid-August 2019, Dave Hickey will commence installing a throttle return mechanism on all operational IRB engines. The installation process does not require any drilling or modification to the engine but simply uses two existing bolts retaining the exhaust cover to fit a bracket that connects a spring. The timing of the installation process will be conducted, where possible, in conjunction with delivery of the annual Regional Mercury Engine Maintenance Workshops that run through until the end of November 2019.

### **What does this mean for Clubs?**

Clubs will be asked to provide access to Clubrooms for Dave to fit the throttle return mechanism to all operational Mercury engines. Once fitted, the throttle return mechanism must not be removed or modified. From 13 December 2019 all Mercury engines must be fitted with a functioning throttle return spring as part of the current SLSNZ Mercury surf engine specification.

### **What will it cost us?**

Nothing. SLSNZ will cover the cost of the parts and the labour associated with the safety modification.