

Chapter 4

SALT WATER BATTERIES

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Introduction

1. Salt water batteries have various applications in Service, but usually form part of rescue equipment. They are of the inert type, and require the addition of either salt or fresh water to become activated.

DESCRIPTION

2. In their inert state, the batteries must be kept sealed, since the entry of any moisture will cause a potential to be developed across the plates. The batteries have only a limited working life, and once activated cannot be used again.

3. The negative plates are of magnesium, and the positive plates may be either of

silver chloride or cuprous chloride; the seal is to be broken, and the battery immersed in either salt or fresh water, only when the equipment to which the battery is fitted is actually in use, e.g., life jackets, dinghies, etc., after ditching. The water acts as an electrolyte, setting up chemical action within the battery, and a potential is developed.

SERVICING

4. It is important that regular checks are made on the battery, without disturbing the sealing, to ensure that no moisture has entered. This would be indicated by a voltage reading on a high-resistance voltmeter connected across the battery terminals.

