Guidance Note (GUI) **9**

**Inflatable Structures**

If you are intending to have a slide, bouncy castle, or some other inflatable structure at your event you should ask the supplier to provide the relevant risk assessment(s) that they have carried out.

The safety of inflatable play devices depends on design, safe operation, and maintenance & Inspection.

**Design**

The design should have taken account of all relevant factors and be supported by design calculations. This will enable the safe operating parameters to be determined. A competent person should carry out this work.

**Safe Operation**

Key points to look out for are:

* Instability due to inadequate anchoring.
* Instability due to winds in excess of the maximum safe wind speed specified by the operator.
* Poor segregation of children; either overcrowding or lack of segregation with large more boisterous children and infants being allowed to use it at once.
* Poor supervision, lack of attendants, children being allowed to bounce on the sides/front steps or climb the walls.
* Details of the safe operation of play inflatable’s, including bouncy castles, can be found on the [www.pipa.org.uk](http://www.pipa.org.uk) web site.

**Maintenance and Inspection**

There are two voluntary schemes for the inspection and certification of inflatable play devices: The Amusement Devices Inspection Procedure Scheme (ADIPS) and the Performance Inflatable Play Accreditation Scheme (PIPA). Inflatables found at traditional fairgrounds and theme parks will have been tested under ADIPS while inflatables found at galas, fetes, hired for domestic parties etc tend to have been tested under PIPA. Both allow operators to comply with their duties under health and safety law. If neither scheme has been used, duty holders should be able to demonstrate that they have taken equally effective measures to comply with their legal obligations.

An inflatable tested under either scheme should have a safety certificate issued by an independent examiner. Each certificate will have a unique number. If there is any doubt over the status of the certificate, it can be confirmed by:

* Contacting the ADIPS Bureau (0191 516 6381)
* In the case of PIPA, by (i) checking the tag number of the device against the database on the web site [www.pipa.org.uk](http://www.pipa.org.uk) or (ii) by phone (01684 252910).