

DSMB SEAREQ SIBO.1



The base of the DSMB with medium-pressure hose inflation and pull.



The SIBO.1 tucked away in its pouch.



SOME DIVE GROUPS HAVE ADOPTED a colour-coded system using delayed surface marker buoys, deploying a red buoy when everything's running to plan and using a yellow buoy with a predetermined action plan when it's not.

I think this an excellent way of alerting surface-support crews and boat-skippers as to the state of play when conducting dives beyond recreational limits using mixed gases and involving decompression, but to my knowledge this isn't standard practice across the board.

Recreational divers who want their SMBs to be as highly visible as possible are using the colours in which they have the most confidence. Red, orange, yellow or black are the commonly available options, though bi-coloured buoys are proving very popular too. However, for the groups that use the colour-coded system a combined red and yellow DSMB seems at odds with their original idea.

I like to use a colour scheme that will be visible in as many different light conditions as possible, so I've been testing various buoys in a quest to find the perfect solution.

The latest is a bi-coloured buoy from German safety

and rescue equipment specialist Seareq, which also makes the ENOS electronic diver location system.

The Design

The SIBO.1 is a red and yellow, self-sealing DSMB 175cm long and 13cm in diameter. It is fitted with an adaptor to take an mp inflator hose, though it doesn't have a locking groove so the hose won't stay attached after filling.

The fill adaptor uses a spring-loaded valve that when depressed also allows the buoy to be filled orally. An alternative inflation method is to fill it from the bottom with exhaust gas from a regulator, air-nozzle or exhaled gas.

A spring-loaded exhaust valve is fitted with a pull-cord to dump the contents.

There are reflective Solas 3M tape patches at the top as well as a neoprene pouch with a coiled lanyard and plastic clip designed to take the maker's ENOS radio and GPS transmitter.

A webbing loop with a screw-down stainless shackle allows for reel-line attachment at the base with hook-and-loop stowage-straps, and the SIBO.1 comes in a fluorescent orange pouch fitted with a plastic karabiner.

In Use

I used this DSMB in tandem with a small spool holding 15m of line. The buoy with line already attached and the spool were tucked away neatly in the pouch and clipped off to

a waist-level D-ring until needed.

The DSMB was easy to access, unravel and deploy. I used all the methods available to practise inflating it at depth, but found the mp hose option the best.

Unfortunately, my ham-fisted model Alex struggled to inflate the buoy on the surface during our photo-shoot at Wraysbury using the hose method while wearing thick gloves, and managed to break off the plastic inflation lug, rendering this option unusable.

All wasn't lost, however, as he was able to orally inflate it instead.

The colouring of the SIBO.1 meant that it could be easily seen at distance against a variety of ambient light and surface conditions. Indeed, with the sun behind it the long colourful buoy seemed to glow from the inside and so stand out from the background.

The ENOS pouch can also be used to take a flashing strobe light or torch for low-visibility dusk- and night-diving.

Conclusion

The humble DSMB is possibly the most crucial bit of safety kit a diver can own, and the easier it is to see at the surface, the safer it is in use. This dual-coloured buoy with multiple filling options is right up there with the best I've seen.

The plastic filling valve wasn't robust enough to take a beating from Alex, but we did have other deployment options.

If you aren't part of a group using the predetermined action plan, this bi-colour sausage could be right up your street. ■

SPECS

- PRICE** ▶▶ 55 euros
- SIZES** ▶▶ 175 x 13cm diameter
- COLOURS** ▶▶ Dual red and yellow with black-taped seams
- FEATURES** ▶▶ ENOS pouch with lanyard, Solas 3M reflective tape, SIBO.1 pouch
- CONTACT** ▶▶ www.seareq.de
- DIVER GUIDE** ★★★★★★☆☆

Ham-fisted Alex models the Seareq SIBO.1 DSMB at Wraysbury.