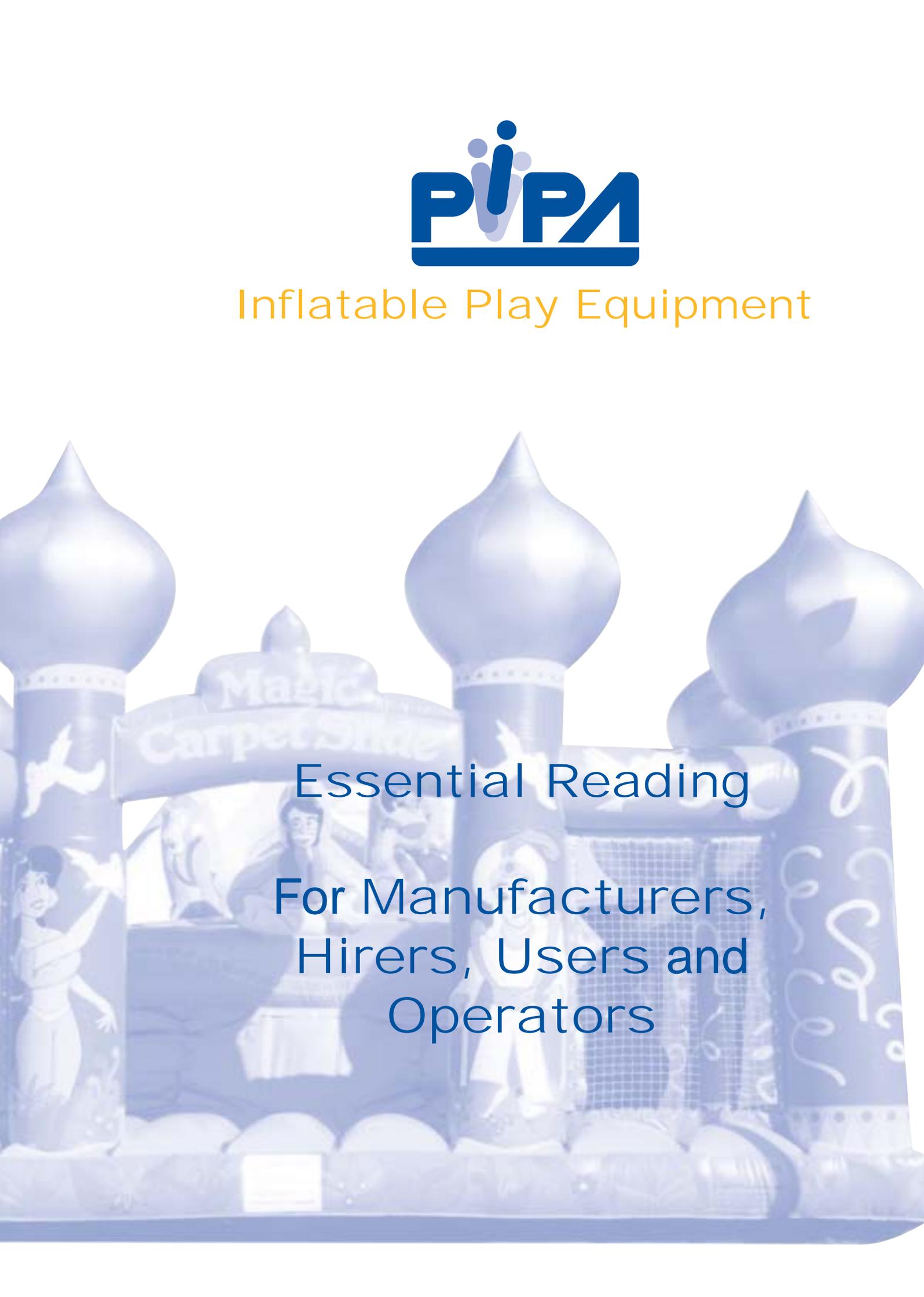




Inflatable Play Equipment

The background of the page is a faded, blue-tinted image of an inflatable play structure. It features several tall, dark blue towers with pointed, teardrop-shaped tops. A central archway is visible, with the words 'Magic Carpet Slide' written on it. The structure is decorated with white illustrations of children playing and other figures. The overall scene is set against a light blue background.

Essential Reading

For Manufacturers,
Hirers, Users and
Operators

Q What is PIPA?

A PIPA is an inspection scheme set up by the inflatable play industry to ensure that children's inflatable play equipment conforms to laid down standards. All four of the industry's trade associations have co-operated in setting up the scheme and it is wholeheartedly supported by the Health and Safety Executive who were consulted at every stage of the scheme's development.

Q Why do we need a scheme?

A Whilst inflatable play is normally a very safe and good way for children to exercise whilst having fun, poorly designed or badly worn equipment can increase the risk of injury to users. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act manufacturers, hirers, operators and users have a responsibility to ensure minimum risk. Clearly that risk is more easily managed if the equipment conforms to accepted standards. PIPA provides a means for everyone in the supply chain to know that the equipment itself is safe, both on initial use and throughout its life.

Q How does the scheme work?

A Each piece of conforming equipment supplied by a reputable manufacturer or importer is "tagged" with a unique number which stays with the inflatable throughout its life. When an inflatable that was manufactured prior to PIPA being set up comes into the system for annual test, it too, is tagged in a similar manner.

The tag number is logged into a central database where the results of its initial test and subsequent annual tests are recorded.

All users have access to the PIPA database via the Internet (www.pipa.org.uk) and can therefore check on the inspection status of any tagged equipment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In addition a certificate is issued with each test.

Q What if my inflatable has no tag?

A The scheme was first implemented on the 1st September 2004, so items manufactured before that date may not be tagged. However, because every inflatable must, by law, be inspected annually **by 1st September 2005 all conforming inflatables should be tagged.**

Q It is tagged, I have checked that the test record is current so everything is safe - Right?

A Wrong! The PIPA certificate says only that it was safe to use at the time of test. It should still be checked for damage before each use, and in any case you should be aware that three elements make for a safe inflatable play environment:

- **Properly manufactured and maintained equipment.**
- **Correct operation (pressure, siting, anchorage etc.) of the equipment.**
- **Supervision**

The PIPA scheme is designed to cover only the first of these, **the operator and user are responsible for the remainder.**

Helping you play safe and stay safe

One of the main reasons behind the drive to establish PIPA, was the recognition by the inflatable play industry that people's safety and health - not to mention its own reputation - could be put at risk by a small number of rogue companies who were willing to cut corners and safety standards in search of quick profit.

PIPA should eventually eliminate such traders by providing users and authorities with a simple way of identifying the professional companies who recognise the vital importance of users' safety and place the highest priority on it.

The scheme was set up by all the trade associations involved in the industry, headed up by the Performance Textiles Association, the umbrella organisation under which AIMODS operates.

The Performance Textiles Association has worked closely with the Inflatable Play Manufacturers Association (IPMA) as well as the two hire associations, the British Inflatables Hirers Association (BIHA) and the National Association of Inflatable Hirers (NAIH) to develop the scheme which has the full backing of the HSE.

What you should be doing

- Manufacturers

All equipment that you manufacture should now be subjected to an initial test against current standards by a registered, qualified (RPII*) inspector working for a PIPA registered inspection body. Tags and certificates can only be issued to and by those registered under the PIPA scheme.

For details of registered inspection bodies, or to find out how you can be registered as such, visit www.pipa.org.uk

- Hirers and Operators

Check that each and every piece of inflatable equipment that you buy is correctly tagged and carries a current PIPA certificate. (Remember that you can also check this via the central database at www.pipa.org.uk.)

When your existing stock becomes due for annual test, make sure that you have it tested by a PIPA registered inspector and that it is correctly tagged and the certificate correctly issued before its next use.

Remember also that safe siting, anchorage and other operational factors are your responsibility. Ensure that the user has clear instructions as to safe use.

- Users

Check that any inflatable that you are offered for sale or hire has a PIPA tag attached and ask to see the current test certificate. If the certificate is not available you can check the test status of any tagged equipment by visiting www.pipa.org.uk and entering the tag number.

Ask the supplier for instructions as to safe use.

Ask the supplier to confirm that required daily checks have been carried out.

Remember that, unless you have made other arrangements, supervision of children on and around the equipment is your responsibility.

**The Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) specialist qualification for inflatable play inspectors is the only one recognised by PIPA*



PIPA is the Inflatable Play Accreditation scheme of



The Performance Textiles Association
42 Heath Street
Tamworth
Staffordshire
B79 7JH

Tel: 01827 52337

Fax: 01827 310827

Email: info@performancetextiles.org.uk

www.pipa.org.uk

Sent to you by:

