CLAIMS

1. An inflatable buoyant platform (100) comprising:

a hollow inflatable enclosure (105) having a top surface (165) and a bottom surface (170), the top and the bottom surfaces (165,170) being peripherally joined by a flexible curtain (175);

a support means (180) being provided inside the enclosure (105) whereby the support means (180) adopts an extended form inside the enclosure (105) to enhance the rigidity of the enclosure (105) when the platform (100) is inflated, while the support means (180) adapts a retracted form inside the enclosure (105) when the enclosure (105) is deflated;

at least one inflating valve (135) on the enclosure (105) for/inflating the enclosure (105) by an external source of compressed gas;

at least one deflating valve (145) on the enclosure (105) for deflating the enclosure by the external source of compressed gas; and

at least one exit valve (185) on the enclosure (105) for allowing the compressed gas to escape while deflating the enclosure (105).

2. The platform (100) according to claim 1, wherein the support means (180) comprises a plurality of support walls (110), pivotally coupled at its top edge (120) to the interior of the top surface (165) while having its bottom edge (115) free, such that in the extended form, the walls (110) stand perpendicularly to the bottom surface (170) wherein the plurality of walls (110) divide the enclosure (105) into a plurality of compartments (130), and in the retracted form, the plurality of walls (110) are rotatable about its top edge (120) to lay serially against the bottom surface (170).

3. The platform (100) according to claim 2, wherein the rotation is limited by providing a hinge (150) at a periphery of the top edge (120), such that in the extended form, at least a portion of the top edge (120) urges against the interior of the top surface (165), thereby resisting further rotation.

4. The platform according to claim 2 wherein at least one of the plurality of walls (110) is provided with a stopper (125), the stopper (125) is immovably fixed to the interior of the bottom surface (170), such that in the extended form, the bottom edge (115) of at least one wall (110) is urged against the stopper (125) for providing greater stability to at least one wall (110), particularly when loaded.

5. The platform (100) according to claim 1 further comprising:

a connecting means (155) along the exterior of the enclosure (105) for coupling a plurality of the platforms (100) together for forming a compound platform (300) of a different shape and size.

6. The platform (100) according to claim 1 further comprising:

at least one compartmental valve (140), accommodated to each plurality of compartments (130) to distribute the compressed gas through either the top or the bottom surfaces (165, 170), as it is received from the external source through the inflating valve (135).

7. The platform (100) according to claim 2 or claim 4, wherein an electromagnetic adhering means is provided between the stopper (125) and the wall (110) operable by a portable power source wherein at least a portion of the wall (110) is magnetic with at least a portion of the stopper (125) being an electromagnet or vice versa.

8. The platform (100) according to claim 2 or claim 4, wherein a mechanical coupling adhering means is provided between the stopper (125) and the wall.

9. A method of inflating the platform (100) according to claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 to 8~~, comprising the steps of:

closing the exit valve (185) to prevent compressed gas from escaping from the enclosure (105);

continuously forcing the compressed gas through at least one of the inflating valve (135) until the compartments are completely expanded, the plurality of walls (110) stand perpendicularly to the bottom surface (170), ~~(165, 170),~~ abutting the stopper (125); and

switching the electromagnetic adhering means on to adhere the plurality of walls (110) to its respective stoppers (125) for better stability of the wall in the extended form.

10. A method of deflating the platform (100) according to claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 to 8~~, comprising the steps of:

switching the electromagnetic adhering means off from the power source to stop adherence of the walls (110) to the stopper (125);

opening at the exit valve (185) for allowing compressed gas to escape from the enclosure (105);

continuously forcing the compressed gas through at least one of the deflating valve (145) until the compartments are completely deflated, the plurality of walls (110) retracted and bent towards the exit valve (185), away from the stopper (125); and

maintaining the rate of exit of the compressed gas through at least one of the exit valve (185) to be higher than the rate of entry of the compressed gas through at least one of the deflating valve (145).