

TECHNICAL BULLETIN #68

Item #1 Inspection of Swift reserves

A rigger in the field discovered a Paraflite Swift reserve which had been rigged incorrectly - likely when originally installed in the harness /container system. The reserve had been inspected and repacked at least six times since the original installation.

Older model Swift reserves use a 'fly-away". type of brake system whereby the main steering line has an additional line with a brake locking loop finger-trapped at the lower end. Both of these lines must be routed through the steering line guide ring - as per manufacturer's instructions.

The rig in question did not have the main steering line routed through the ring!

The reserve had been used by the owner, and had deployed normally. The jumper did not let go of the toggles after releasing the brakes and likely did not notice any abnormality. Had a toggle been released the toggle and steering line would have been free to fly out of reach - with possible tragic results.

Item #2 Sealing Reserve Pins

A number of riggers are not using an approved method of sealing the reserve ripcord pins after the normal inspection/ repack cycle. Several rigs have been noted with sealing thread left with a loop large enough for the pin(s) to be extracted without breaking the thread.

The seal and safety-tie are there, not as some mistakenly think to hold the pins in place, but for the protection of the user and rigger. A correctly sealed reserve indicates that the rig was inspected and repacked and has not been tampered with since leaving the rigger. The reserve data card will tell when this service was performed.

A common method of attaching a seal is by using a larks-head knot combined with two half-hitches-enclosing the knot in the lead seal (see Poynter 7.94). The thread should be loose enough to allow some movement of the pin(s) but not loose enough to allow the loop to slip over the end of the pin.

Barry McAuley - Chair
Technical & Safety Committee

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