

TECHNICAL BULLETIN #58 Item #1 Strength Testing Reserves

There is some concern that ram-air reserves are not being tensile tested on a regular basis.

Although many manufacturers do not specify a fabric test at any regular interval, one does. Under Inspection Instructions, Performance Designs in their Ram-Air Reserve Parachute Owner's Manual, describes how they want all their reserves inspected and tested - which includes a fabric strength test at each repack cycle.

If you do not have the proper tools to perform these tests you should advise your client to take his PD reserve to a qualified rigger who does.

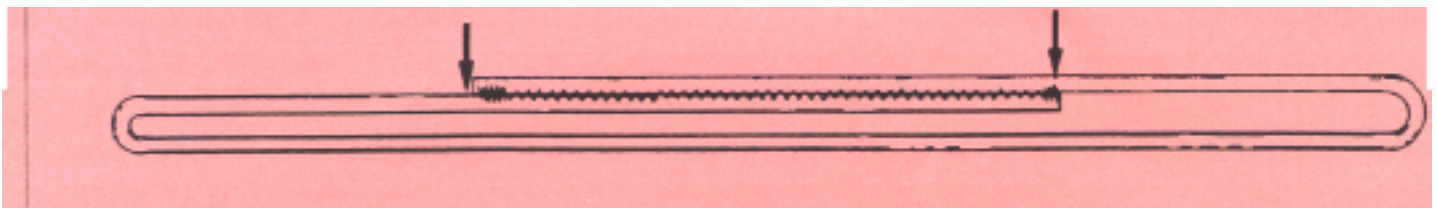
PD also requires Riggers to put a check-mark in a small box on the warning label each time the reserve is repacked. This process ensures the reserve canopy will have a history of its use over time - important when decisions are being made regarding a "service life".

Item #2 Safety Stows on Reserve Deployment Bags

A number of reports from the field describe a condition whereby some Riggers are perhaps "looking the other way" when doing an inspection of the suspension line safety-stow on reserve free bags.

It seems many of these safety stows may only be undergoing a cursory external inspection during the Inspection/repack cycle. This is an important part of the deployment sequence and must be thoroughly inspected each time the reserve is repacked. It should be removed from the channel, stretched by hand, and inspected while it is stretched.

The common wear-points on safety stows are where the shock cord overlaps (see diagram) and is sewn. Usually the internal elastic either becomes excessively weak or breaks away leaving only the outer casing intact.



Safety stows are machine sewn, not hand stitched, and all riggers should have a ready supply of these items in their rigging kit. All safety stows may not be the same length or constructed in the same manner as shown - if you are unsure of the correct length or contact the manufacturer of the harness/container system.