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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Re: Relative Workshop Product Service Bulletin #20000302, regarding main container closing loop retainers on Vector I and Vector II Harness/container Systems.

Because of the amazing number of combinations of rig and canopy sizes, reports from the field indicate that implementation of the above PSB may be creating more problems than it is solving. The main container closing loop retainer design in question was chosen because it allowed a fairly wide range of canopies sizes to be packed in the same container. Over the years this design advantage has apparently been abused to the point where canopies much smaller or much larger than the rig was designed to hold, have found their way into old Vectors. When the closing loop attachment is moved to the main container bottom flap, these under and over sized canopies no longer fit. This means that either the main container closing pin is no longer secure, or that the main container bottom flap no longer adequately covers the line stows. Both of these problems present far more danger than the existing loop retainer.

So, for the moment at least, please disregard the PSB, and do nothing.

Background: The locking loop retainer in question has been used on Vector I and Vector II's, as well as countless copycat rigs for over 20 years. It is estimated that well over 50 million jumps have been made with this design with no fatalities attributed to a locking loop retainer (an amazing safety record), until the entanglement on an apparently properly set grommet on a Javelin. Any change we make to this extremely reliable system has an unknown, and possibly higher malfunction rate.

The entanglement in January on a Reflex did not involve the loop retainer, but an apparently improperly set grommet on one of the main container flaps, and is therefore an entirely different problem.

While we step back and carefully look at the situation, there are a couple of things you can do to lessen the likelihood of your experiencing this problem. First and foremost, keep your suspension lines away from the loop retainer on deployment, by packing your risers and lines down the side of the main container, instead of wrapping them around the bottom of the reserve container. Secondly, deploy in a stable body position, no more than 45 degrees head high.

Another point must be addressed. The Javelin entanglement on a well-set grommet was only possible because of the tiny size of the Spectra line. The larger diameter of Dacron line would have made this entanglement impossible. This is just one more reason why you might consider not getting microline on your next canopy.

Finally, in light of the changes in canopy materials and design, as well as radical changes in what we do with our bodies between exit and opening, it might be time for you to upgrade your old container system for one, like the Vector III, which is designed to deal with these changes.