

TECHNICAL BULLETIN #69

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Item #1 Mirage System Recall – Soft Reserve Ripcords

Mirage Systems has received 2 reports of reserve ripcord pins breaking under apparently normal wear. Mirage Systems, working with the sub-contractor who manufactured the ripcord assemblies, has not been able to identify the cause of the failures. Detailed microscopic and metallurgical examinations have been carried out with nominal results. Further investigation is ongoing. Both failures occurred in a single batch of ripcord sub-assemblies manufactured in November 2001. Other assemblies from the same batch were tested and were normal. However, because both failures occurred in the same batch, in lieu of the discovery of a definitive cause and in the interest of safety, Mirage Systems and the subcontractor, Capewell Components, have decided to recall all ripcords from the batch for inspection and possible replacement—effective immediately.

All owners of Mirage Systems with soft reserve ripcords should check the ripcord data panel, found on the soft handle opposite the attachment Velcro. Suspect handles are marked S/N M005128.

Mirage Systems can be contacted at: info@miragesys.com or www.miragesys.com

Item #2 Soft-Links on Reserves

Although several canopy manufacturers have tested and received FAA approval for the use of soft connector links on their reserves, this does not mean riggers are allowed to replace metal links with soft links on all reserve canopies. Even those manufacturers who have received approval for the soft links have only tested them for specific canopies.

Manufacturers have only tested reserve soft links with the line types and materials used on the reserves for which the soft links are approved. Using soft links on reserve canopies for which they have not been tested may cause catastrophic problems—from generated opening forces and incompatibility with the many different suspension line materials.

Soft links are specifically different from metal links and are not fully interchangeable with metal links. To determine compatibility, the installed strength must be evaluated against maximum opening forces and interaction between different suspension line fibres.

Any rigger contemplating replacing metal connector links with soft links on a reserve parachute should contact the manufacturer of the canopy prior to initiating replacement.

Barry McAuley – Chair
Technical & Safety Committee

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