



SAFETY NOTICE

Issued by Angus Pinkerton - Chairman of the Flying & Safety Committee - 24 June 1994

All Hang Glider pilots (including Safety officers, Coaches and Instructors).

If you hold a copy of the BHPA Operations Manual this notice must be inserted into it and retained until it is withdrawn or superseded on instructions from the Chairman FSC.

Harness Failure

On Sunday 5th June, following a mid air collision, a pilot successfully deployed his pulled down apex parachute. He then fell from his harness and sustained fatal injuries.

The harness has been examined and it was discovered that the rope which secured the shoulder straps had parted at the position where it passes through a metal ring in the back of the harness.

The harness in question was an Airtime Pod Plus, but this design feature is common to many harness types (e.g. Supp, Keller Pod, Apco Pod, etc.). Failures of ropes passing through rings on cocoon and stirrup harnesses have also been known in the past.

It is believed that the rope that failed on the harness in question had been renewed less than 12 months before the accident. This rope is now being examined by textiles specialists to see if there was some specific reason for the early failure.

In the meantime the FSC recommends that ALL PILOTS CARRY OUT A SPECIAL DETAILED INSPECTION OF THEIR HARNESSSES, ESPECIALLY THE SHOULDER STRAP ROPES, BEFORE FURTHER FLIGHT.

We would ask that any pilots finding severe wear report it via the BHPA Office in writing.

IMPORTANT NOTE: REPLACING HARNESS ROPES

The question of what type and specification of rope to use is still being investigated, and is a much more complicated subject than it might appear. It is hoped to issue clear advice on the type of rope suitable as a replacement in the near future. In the meantime pilots are cautioned about fitting replacement rope of unknown breaking strain, construction and abrasion resistance characteristics. Our researches to date have revealed that appearance and size (diameter) give very misleading indications and that the UK market is awash with rope/accessory cord of very dubious quality.