



IRATA SAFETY BULLETIN SB23

SAFETY ALERT Pre Use Checking of Equipment

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Importance of pre use function checks has been illustrated by incidents involving:

- 1 Incorrect threading by the manufacturer of a buckle connecting the upper section and chest ascender to lower section of a full body harness by the manufacturer. This was undetected until noticed by a technician when on the ropes.
Action: Check buckles are threaded as described in manufacturer's instructions, even before first use.
- 2 Quick release buckle mechanisms can become damaged or contaminated, but without close inspection they may appear to be functioning correctly. Such damage can lead to the buckle becoming detached (although this does not occur under load).
Action: Clean and lubricate according to manufacturer's instructions. Check the function and not just the apparent function/ listen to the noise. E.g. has the buckle actually locked?
- 3 Twistlock karabiner not closing fully.
Action: If the gate mechanism has become damaged or contaminated, this could allow the gate to close, but not to lock. Check twistlock karabiners are locked properly and not just closed.
- 4 Excessive wear on the harness webbing attaching the D-ring.
Action: Pay attention to areas of high wear. Be aware that damage which builds up slowly may not be as obvious.



Excessive wear on webbing loop of a sit harness