

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
SAFETY INFORMATION

This item below was taken from the January '88 issue of Parachutist Magazine. It is a follow up to the item from the November Parachutist that was issued on a Safety Information Sheet on 21st December 1987. This article is for information only, but highlights the fact that reserve canopies need a thorough inspection when re-packed.

Mesh Problem Resurfaces

Paul Thompson, loft manager at Para-Gear, recently wrote to USPA about discovering severely weakened fabric on a reserve he himself had inspected and repacked just 120 days earlier.

The reserve was a Security Aero-Conical which suffered from the same "accelerated deterioration" problem as Pioneer encountered with some 100 K series reserves which had to be recalled.

"Just 120 days before, I had tested the F-111 which was against the mesh and could not find any weak areas," Thompson said. "I was shocked 120 days later when I could put my thumb through with no effort at all... this fabric was like tissue paper."

Thompson voiced several concerns:

"There are still dozens and dozens of canopies [*with similar problems*] which have not been found and removed from service yet. The longer they go undetected, the greater the chance they may kill someone before they can be removed from service.

"Some affected canopies will probably remain 'out there' for years to come. Information about such problems tends to be lost or forgotten all too quickly in our industry. Riggers in the future are not likely to know of this problem and will not be as vigilant as they should be.

"Skydivers who own canopies produced in 1982-83 could develop the mesh problem in the future and should at least get their reserves inspected and repacked every 60 days instead of 120 days. I already know that a 'perfectly good canopy' suffering from this problem can go bad in 120 days. Maybe the best idea would be to just get rid of all of the 1982-83 canopies."

Tony Butler
JOINT NATIONAL COACH
AND SAFETY OFFICER

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