



# SAFETY INFORMATION

3/94

## LIFTING OF NOVA MAIN CANOPY GROUNDING

At the Riggers and STC Meetings of the 17th March 1994 it was agreed to lift the grounding of 'Nova' main canopies (Safety Notice 1/94). Below is the text of a 'Product Bulletin issued by Glide Path International giving details of their reasons for withdrawing their previous 'Product Grounding and Recall Bulletin' of the 13th January 1994.

Glide Path Product Bulletin:3 (February 2, 1994).

Statement:

On January 13, 1994, Glide Path International, Inc. issued a statement advising jumpers not to jump their NOVA canopies until we could discover if there was a problem with the canopy. Since then we have examined in detail all available evidence surrounding reports of accidents which occurred while a jumper was using a NOVA. We are unable to determine a correlation between the accidents and the design of the NOVA because, in every case, one or more of the following conditions was present:

- 1) High winds, producing turbulent conditions
- 2) Vigorous thermal activity, producing turbulence
- 3) Operator-error involving excessive control input close to the ground.

Glide Path has also received a barrage of communication from around the world, attesting to the superiority of the NOVA design and performance, and vigorously defending the right to continue using the NOVA. We believe that any perception of the NOVA as a "dangerous canopy" has been aggravated by overzealous media attention, reporting hearsay as fact, and simple coincidence.

The initial evaluation of the NOVA consisted of approximately 24,000 jumps by two eight way teams and two four way teams over a period of eighteen months. The reports from this program were unanimous in their praise of the openings, flight, and landing characteristics of the NOVA.

In pursuit of the desire to prevent parachuting accidents in general, Glide Path restates (in part) the warning which appears in similar form on our canopies and in our owner's manuals: "...THE USER ASSUMES ALL RISKS... Serious injury or death can result from the use, attempted use, or misuse of this canopy, regardless of how it is maintained, packed, deployed or operated..." Similar warnings appear on most manufacturers' parachuting products. Caution must be exercised when flying any parachute canopies, particularly those which are designed for ultra high performance. They should not be used in turbulent conditions, and violent manoeuvres close to the ground should be avoided. The necessity for education in canopy control becomes more critical as the performance of canopies increases.

In consideration of the facts stated above, and other information received from a wide variety of sources, it is overwhelmingly evident that the NOVA is no more and no less dangerous than any ultra high performance parachute canopy, and Glide Path International feels compelled to withdraw its advisory not to jump the NOVA.

Sincerely

Mike Furry  
Glide Path International, Inc.

Tony Butler  
Technical Officer

18th March 1994

### Distribution

CCI's, Riggers, Council, Sport Parachutist, File