



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

**Defence
Infrastructure
Organisation**

SAFETY ALERT

Subject: IMMEDIATE STOP OF USE OF “ABSORBICA” ENERGY ABSORBER LANYARDS.

Number: SA 05/11

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Date of issue: 9th June 2011

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Who Should Read this: CEStOs, Top Level Budget Holders, MOD Project Managers, Organisations appointing Authorising Engineers (AE) and Authorised Persons (AP) including: Commanding Officers/Heads of Establishment, Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Deputy Directors (Estates), DIO Advisors, DIO Facility Managers and Maintenance Management Organisations, who are advised to draw it to the attention of the relevant Supply Chain organisations.

When it takes effect: immediately

When it is due to expire: until rescinded

Health & Safety

Equality And Diversity Impact Assessment

This policy has been Equality and Diversity Impact Assessed in accordance with the Department's Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment Tool against:

Part 1 Assessment Only (no diversity impact found)

1. Introduction:

COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONTENTS OF THIS ALERT WILL ENABLE COMPLIANCE WITH THE HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ETC ACT 1974 AND ITS SUBORDINATE REGULATIONS.

The appropriate MOD officer shall arrange for the Regional Prime Contractor (RPC)/ Maintenance Management Organisation (MMO) contractor or other persons responsible for controlling:

- a. access to Restricted High Places as defined in JSP 375 Vol 3 Chapter 7, or
- b. any aspect of Working at Height activity in connection with fixed access systems,

to carry out actions in accordance with this Safety Alert.

On MOD Establishments occupied by United States Visiting Forces (USVF) responsibility is jointly held by USVF and DIO (USF). At base level this jointly managed organisation is to take appropriate action to implement the contents of this Safety Alert. Where this Safety Alert contains procedures which differ significantly from USVF practice, DE (USF) code of practice is to be issued.

2. Background.

On the 17th of May 2001 "Petzl" manufacturers of Fall Arrest Equipment, following an incident with one of its products, issued a global safety alert regarding two items of its product range, which are:

SCORPIO Lanyards
ABSORBICA energy absorbers

Petzl have issued formal instructions for the immediate product recall of the "SCORPIO" lanyards and further instructions for the self inspection of the "ABSORBICA" energy absorbers.

As a result of this Defence Infrastructure Organisation is formally instituting the below actions across all of its establishments.

3. Required actions.

- 3.1 For the "ABSORBICA" energy absorbers product range the following actions are to be carried out.
 - a. Immediately stop using the "Absorbica" range of energy absorbers manufactured by Petzl.
 - b. Carry out self inspection of the energy absorber using the procedure detailed by Petzl. See link below.
 - c. Send details of inspection and number of items inspected to Petzl via one of their local distributors.
 - c. Where the inspection reveals the anticipated defects then the product is to be taken out of service and forwarded to Petzl's local distributor.
 - d. Where self inspection reveals that the individual product being examined has no defects it can remain in service on the condition that the inspection and the unique identity of the product is recorded.

3.2 For the SCORPIO range of lanyards the following actions are to be taken.

- a. immediately stop using the product until further notice

3.3 In addition to the above, the following general actions given below shall also be carried out

- a. Where any Work at Height activity that comes under the provisions of JSP 375 Vol.3 Chapter 7 is to take place the Authorising Engineer (Working at Height) or the Authorised Person (Working at Height), before issuing a Permit to Climb, is to check with the Person in Charge of the climbing team that Petzl “SCORPIO” lanyards are not being used.

If the Person in Charge proposes to use “SCORPIO” energy absorbers then the Permit to Climb shall not be issued. The AE (WaH) or the AP (WaH) is to instruct that no climbing is to take place unless other suitable lanyards are used.

- b. Where any Work at Height activity that is not covered by the provisions of JSP 375 Vol 3 Chapter 7 is proposed, the person(s) within the RPC/MMO charged with the implementation of a Safe System of Work is to ensure that operatives carrying out the works do not use the Petzl “SCORPIO” lanyard.
- c. If the Person in Charge (PiC) proposes to use “ABSORBICA” energy absorbers then the AE (WaH) or the AP (WaH) shall ensure that the PiC declares and records on the Permit to Climb that he has inspected the products fully in accordance with Petzl’s instructions and that they are defect free.

4. Further Information.

Further information on the products under consideration and the inspection process can be found on Petzl’s website. A link is given below for ease of access.

<http://www.petzl.com/en/security-alert-0/2011/05/19/request-immediate-self-inspection-all-absorbica-energy-absorbers>