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## **Riggers' Subcommittee**

Minutes of the meeting held on

**Thursday 25 July 2019 at 1700**

at BPA HQ, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF

**Present:** Pete Sizer (RE) - Chair  
Karen Saunders (AR)  
Rick Boardman (RE)  
Gary Stevens (AR)  
Noel Purcell (RE)  
Dave Major (AR)

**Key:**

AR = Advanced Rigger

RE = Rigger Examiner

**Apologies:** John Curtis, Andy Shaw, Josh Clark.

**In Attendance:** Jeff Montgomery - STO/Chair STC  
Tony Butler - Chief Operating Officer  
John Hitchen - Vice Chair STC  
Angel Fernandez - Communications Manager  
Trudy Kemp - Assistant to COO/STO

**Observers:** Martin Harris, Brucie Johnson, Tim Moran

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### **ITEM**

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Any declarations of interest would be made at the item/s to which they relate.

**2. MINUTES FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 30 MAY 2019**

It was proposed by Karen Saunders and seconded by Rick Boardman that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee Meeting of 30 May 2019 be accepted as a true record.

**Carried Unanimously**

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 30 MAY 2019**

**Page 1, Item 2 – Equipment Inspection Policies Working Group.** There was nothing further to report at this time.

**Page 3, Item 7 – Equipment Related Incident Reports Resume (ii).** The Chair of STC reported that he had written to the Rigger involved in this incident reminding him of his responsibilities.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 30 MAY 2019**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting of STC.

**5. REQUEST TO HOST A BPA RIGGING COURSE**

A letter from Andy Shaw had been circulated with the Agenda requesting to host a BPA Rigging Course from 2 – 6 December 2019 at Sky Gear UK, Dunkeswell. The Examiners running the Course would be Andy Shaw and George Panagopoulos.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Karen Saunders and seconded by Gary Stevens that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

**6. SUNPATH BELLY BAND SPEC FOR CONSIDERATION**

A spec for a Sunpath Belly Band together with various photos had been submitted by Josh Clark for consideration by the Committee and had been circulated with the Agenda. This had followed on from various discussions about the use of belly bands and who can make and fit them.

During consideration of this item, the meeting noted that there are various specs for belly bands being seen in use. The Committee wished to reiterate that any modification, alteration of the harness, which includes the manufacturing of chest strap extensions, belly bands or removable components of the harness, must be carried out or signed off by an Advanced Rigger.

If the installation of any component parts such as belly bands or chest strap extensions produced by a recognised manufacturer requires further stitching to the harness, this must be carried out by an Advanced Rigger.

It was agreed by those present that a BPA Safety Information Bulletin should also be circulated to highlight this issue (Appendix A).

Following consideration, it was proposed by Noel Purcell and seconded by Karen Saunders that the spec for the Sunpath Belly Band as previously circulated be accepted for use. The spec would also be attached to the Minutes (Appendix B).

**Carried Unanimously**

Some discussion then followed regarding the location of documents and their traceability. It had been agreed in the past that any paperwork involving equipment related modifications, Safety Bulletins etc. would be attached to the outgoing Minutes to which they relate.

Karen Saunders said that she would give some thought to creating an online document folder, so that rigging related documents could be kept in one place and are easily located. Rick Boardman stated that he was also willing to assist with this project.

**7. EQUIPMENT-RELATED INCIDENT REPORT RÉSUMÉ**

The following equipment-related incident reports had been received since the last meeting:

- i) On 23 June 2019, a Tandem Instructor exited an aircraft and deployed the drogue pilot chute. The Instructor carried out his systems check and shortly after he experienced a premature opening of the main container. After realising what was taking place, he initiated his emergency procedures and deployed the reserve canopy and landed safely on the PLA.

The Tandem Instructor had carried out one previous descent on that system on the previous day.

The equipment was a SWS Tandem container with a total of 18 jumps on it. The main canopy was an Icarus 364. The reserve canopy was a Twin 340 and the AAD was a Vigil Quattro.

After inspection of the system, it appears that the incident occurred due to the incorrect routing of the closing pin/cable during packing.

The system was assembled and packed by the TI himself, who is also an Advanced Rigger. Video footage of the incident was shown to those present.

- ii) On 5 July 2019, a C Licensed parachutist with 383 descents deployed his main canopy at approximately 2900ft and experienced a slow opening. At approximately 2300ft the AAD fired activating his reserve canopy. The parachutist ended up with two canopies out and proceeded to steer his main canopy and subsequently landing safely on the PLA.

The container was a Wings. The main canopy was a Sabre 150 and the reserve was a PD146 with a Vigil AAD.

After further inspection of the AAD, it was established that the AAD was on Tandem setting. The jumper hadn't noticed that the AAD was on the incorrect setting at the time of switching it on. It was also found that the jumper had also hired the AAD from an equipment supplier in the UK. The reserve was repacked on 3 July, two days prior to the incident.

The Advanced Packer who installed the AAD and repacked the reserve canopy, also failed to realise the AAD was on the Tandem setting at the time.

The Chief Instructor has spoken to the Advanced Packer in question and reminded him that part of his inspection is to ensure that AAD is working correctly and in the case of those AAD's with multimode settings, they must ensure that they check the setting once the AAD has finished its self-test and calibration sequence.

- iii) On 19 July 2019, as part of a reserve inspection for an Atom container which had not been repacked for four years, the reserve pilot chute did not clear the container. The inside of the container was also found to be very sticky. The current make of container is affected by the 4 month repack rule and the stickiness is presumed to be due to the four year storage.

The pilot chute was cleaned and the container talced and left to air over night. There was no tackiness found and the rig was repacked and then checked again after a week, to ensure that there was no further issue. After 7 days the rig was test pulled and again the reserve pilot chute did not clear the container. The kit was returned to the owner with the ripcord not in the housing to prevent further use.

The packer has recommended that the equipment is grounded, until it has been lined as per the Product service bulletin concerning Atom containers.

The Atom container concerned was manufactured on 15 March 2006.  
Serial No: RC 026C.

Video footage of the test pull had also accompanied the report and was shown to those present.

Gary Stevens presented the container relating to this incident and he subsequently carried out a live test pull of the pilot chute. It wasn't a clear pull and upon inspection the container was found to be very sticky.

Following discussion, it was agreed by those present that the container be re-lined before going back into service.

- iv) On 21 July a Tandem Instructor pulled his primary release handle and experienced a detached drogue as the kill line on the drogue snapped. The main container was open, and the main bag was out but appeared to be stuck in the burble. The Instructor opted to cutaway and then deploy his reserve as he had concerns that the

main bag was in the way of the reserve. As he did this, the main bag started to extract.

The equipment was a Next Tandem container, with an A2 370 main canopy, a Twin Speed reserve and a Cypres AAD.

The last 100 jump inspection was carried out on 5 April 2019 by a qualified Rigger. At the time of the inspection the risers had 2152 jumps, the lines had 452 jumps and the drogue had 242. According to the blue book, the drogue had done a further 77 jumps, giving the drogue a total of 319 jumps on the day of the incident. Video footage of this incident was also shown to those present.

This incident had highlighted the importance to all Packers and Riggers of the importance of recording an accurate record of jump numbers of component parts in the Tandem Inspection Checklist (blue book) especially if these parts are being swapped or transferred between various equipment. This was especially important when various packers were dealing with several sets of equipment.

Following consideration, it was agreed by those present that the Committee look at ways of educating Packers & Riggers of the importance of completing paperwork accurately.

## **8. ADVANCED PACKER (AP) COURSE REPORTS**

A résumé of the Advanced Packer Courses held since the last meeting had been circulated to those present:

- i) George Panagopoulos had run an Advanced Packer Training Course at Netheravon from 17 – 20 June 2019. The Course was attended by Jordan Dickinson who was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- ii) Karen Saunders had run an AP (Tandem) Training and Examination Course at Skydive Langar from 18 – 19 June 2019. The Course was attended by Jonathan Charles and Dylan Morris-Roberts, both of whom successfully completed the Course and were awarded AP (Grade T) status.
- iii) George Panagopoulos had run an Advanced Packer Course at Netheravon from 1 – 2 July 2019. The Course was attended by Alex Dale, who successfully completed the Course and was awarded AP (Grade S) status.
- iv) Noel Purcell had run an Advanced Packer (Tandem) Examination Course at Skydive Hibaldstow from 4 – 5 July 2019. The Course was attended by Justinas Kubilinskas who successfully completed the Course and was awarded AP (Grade T) status.

## **9. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS**

There had been no BPA Safety Notices or Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting.

## **10. MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS**

There had been no manufacturers' Safety Notices or Information Bulletins received since the last meeting.

## **11. A.O.B.**

- i) The Chair reported that the Rigger Training Manual and Reserve Packing Guide have recently been updated and were available to download from the BPA website.
- ii) Noel Purcell had asked for the subject of sealing of reserves to be discussed.

Noel reported that he was now seeing paper as well as lead seals being used on equipment from overseas. He asked if anyone was experiencing any problems with this particular sealing method.

Following discussion, there were no problems or issues that had been identified by those present.

The COO gave the meeting some background info on why the BPA method of sealing reserves had been developed, and how testing in the past on the American method of sealing of reserves had shown a significant increase on the pull force on a reserve.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Karen Saunders and seconded by Noel Purcell that if a paper seal had been used on a reserve in place of a lead seal, this method was deemed acceptable as long as the Rigger or Packer concerned had used a method of identification on their seal that was identifiable to them.

For: 4                      Against: 1 (Rick Boardman)                      Abstentions: 0  
**Carried**

It was felt by those present that the Committee look at the various methods of sealing reserves in more detail at a future meeting as it had been a while since this subject had been discussed.

iii) **Reinstatement of David Sawyer's AP(S) Rating**

A letter had been received from Andy Shaw and circulated to those present requesting the re-instatement of David Sawyer's AP (S) rating.

Andy Shaw had reported that David was initially trained by Alan Hewitt at Sky Science and attained his AP (S) rating in November 1998. David remained current until December 2015, when he let his rating lapse. Between these two dates David had carried out approximately 500 reserve pack jobs.

After speaking with Pete Sizer, David attended an AP Course (Training) on 27 April 2019 at Dunkeswell, and on 24/25 July, David completed the AP (S) exam at Sky Gear UK (Dunkeswell).

The Course reports and Training / Exam Records had also accompanied Andy Shaw's request.

Some discussion followed and it was felt that if anyone was considering running a revaluation Course for someone whose AP rating had lapsed, then the Committee should be made aware of the intentions prior to running a Course.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Gary Stevens and seconded by Rick Boardman that David Sawyer's AP(S) rating be reinstated.

**Carried Unanimously**

iv) Karen Saunders asked a question on behalf of a Parachute Rigger who is working towards his AR rating.

The Rigger concerned had asked for some clarification as to where the line is between parachute rigging and advanced rigging.

One of areas in particular involved the changing and replacing of leg strap covers as it involved work that was integral to the harness.

The meeting referred to the earlier discussion (item 6 refers) regarding modifications and alteration of the harness and to the subsequent BPA Safety Information bulletin being drafted concerning this issue.

- v) The Chair of STC reported that as part of the move to good governance Council is likely to move from 6 Council meetings per year to 4. This helps with the preparation of papers etc for better decision making. Therefore, all the various Committees would also go from 6 to 4 meeting per year, including possibly STC. He stated that Council is seeking the views of the Committees prior to making a final decision, and that he would be seeking of views of CIs at the STC meeting this evening.

**12. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Thursdays, 9 September, 14 November.  
at 1700 at BPA HQ

**Distribution:**

Chair Riggers' Subcommittee, All CIs, All Riggers, APs, Council, CAA, Editor – Skydive



# SAFETY INFORMATION

## HARNESSES REMOVABLE COMPONENT PARTS AND HARNESSES WORK

During Rigger's meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2019, the Sub-Committee was informed that Sun Path Products Inc. and The Federal Aviation Administration of the United States of America (FAA) view any chest strap and bellyband modifications, to be harness components, and therefore they are classed as advanced rigging work.

At the Riggers Sub-Committee meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2019, it was decided that any modification, alteration of the harness, which includes the manufacturing of chest strap extensions, belly bands or removable components of the harness, must be carried out or signed off by an Advanced Rigger.

If the installation of any component parts such as belly bands or chest strap extensions produced by a recognised manufacturer requires further stitching to the harness, this must be carried out by an Advanced Rigger.

The Riggers' Sub-Committee have produced an approved specification for the manufacturing of belly bands, and this can be found in the minutes for the Sub-Committee meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2019.

08 August 2019

Jeff Montgomery  
Safety & Technical Officer

Pete Sizer  
Chairman Riggers' Subcommittee

### Distribution

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## Sunpath Belly Band

### Strap Section

63" of Ty8 webbing. The middle of the length of webbing is folded in half widthways to create a 1" wide section, that is 6" in length and stitched using a wide zigzag pattern.

Ty8 is then folded in half lengthways with a half twist to form a 3.5" loop of the 1" zigzagged section. The loop is secured by 5 passes of straight stitches with the remaining length of webbing stitched together to form a standard Ty8 chest strap with a 1.75" turnback.

Finished length 31".

### Buckle Section

13" of Ty8 webbing. 2.5"-8.5" of one end is folded widthways and zigzagged to form a 1" section.

The opposite end is turned back 1.5" with the buckle and Ty12 chafing strip between the metalwork and webbing. It is half twisted and stitched onto the first 1" of the opposite end using 2x 5 passes of straight stitches across the width of the webbing and 3 bartacks along the length of the webbing.

ie: A standard sunpath chest strap buckle attachment on an articulated harness.

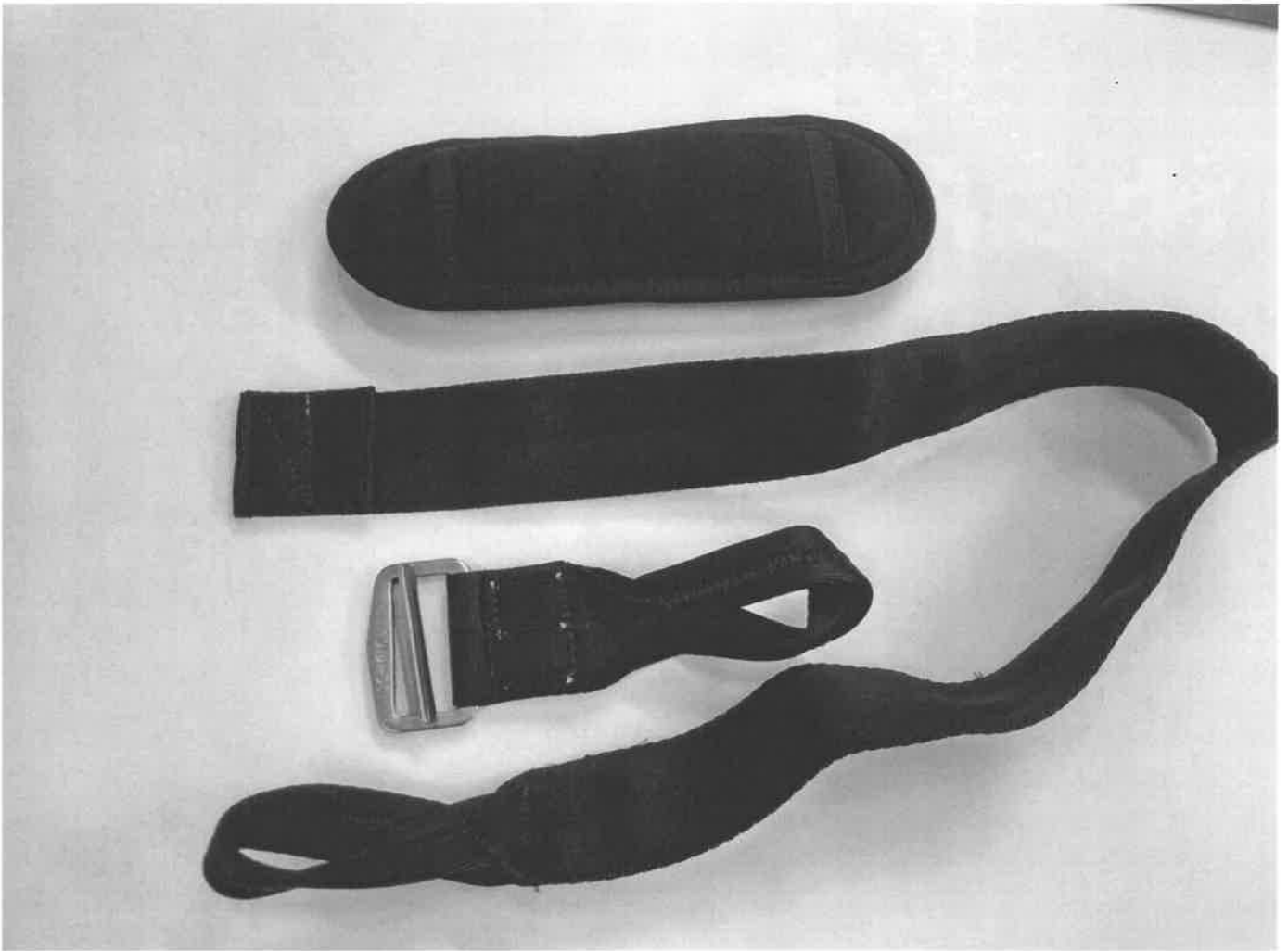
Finished length 5.5" (not inc buckle)

Padding is 8" of cordura and a spacer foam backing with a channel for the webbing to pass through and excess to be stowed in.

See Photos.



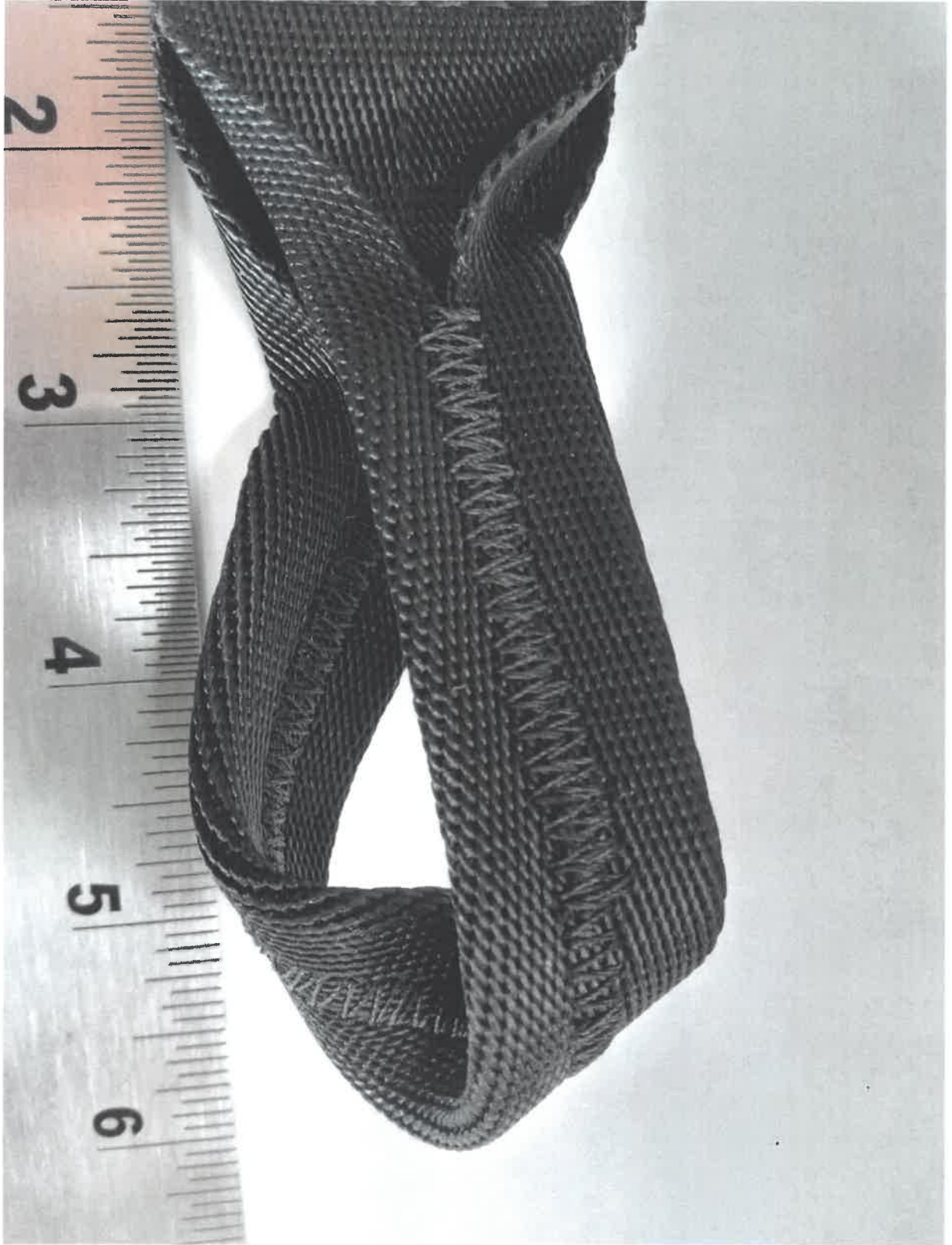
**Appendix B**





Appendix B





Appendix B

