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BHPA

SAFETY ADVISORY

Issued by Angus Pinkerton - Chairman of the Flying & Safety Committee 23 December 2004.

All pilots must READ, DIGEST AND TAKE ACTION on the contents of this Notice and keep it for future reference.

If you hold a copy of the BHPA Technical Manual this notice must be inserted into it and retained until it is withdrawn or superseded on instructions from the Chairman FSC.

EMERGENCY PARACHUTE PAYLOAD: DHV CERTIFIED CANOPIES

The DHV have issued a recommendation that **pilots using DHV certified emergency parachutes should ensure that their maximum take-off weight never exceeds 75% of the parachute's certified maximum payload.** (This means that if the emergency parachute has a certified maximum payload of say 114kg, it is only recommended for use with a maximum of 85kg payload.)

This is as a result of a DHV study of injury rates arising during the use of emergency parachutes. They examined all the reported incidents where emergency parachutes had been used by DHV pilots in 2003, and after stripping out all of those where the pilot's fall had been arrested by trees, found that the eleven incidents left showed a clear trend: pilot injury (generally serious) occurred in all those events where the load was greater than 78% of the DHV certified parachute's maximum payload.

The DHV emergency parachute standard uses a 6.8m/s descent rate as the criteria. This is considerably in excess of the BHPA 5.5m/s recommendation (which is also used for the CEN 12491 standard). The high rate of injury uncovered in Germany should be no surprise to those following the FSC's carefully researched advice on parachute sizes and acceptable descent rates.

If your emergency parachute is a DHV certified type, check to find the maximum certified payload and ensure that your total weight in flight does not exceed 75% of this figure. (The DHV are planning to list all DHV certified emergency parachutes and their certified max. payloads on their website: www.dhv.de.)

(Nb. Reducing the max. payload by 25% should, by calculation, reduce the descent rate to approx 5.8 m/s. Members are reminded that comprehensive advice on emergency parachutes is contained in the BHPA Pilot Handbook.)

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