



Interagency Aviation SAFETY ALERT



No. IASA 17-02

Date: April 11, 2017

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Subject: Gunner Strap Recall

Area of Concern: Helicopter Operations

Distribution: Aviation Operations

Discussion: The National Technology and Development Program (NTDP) is recalling all gunner straps (MTDC-984) due to the increased potential for improper rigging/configuration. In May of 2014, Interagency Aviation Safety Alert ([IASA 14-01](#)) communicated this hazard when used for doors-off helicopter operations.

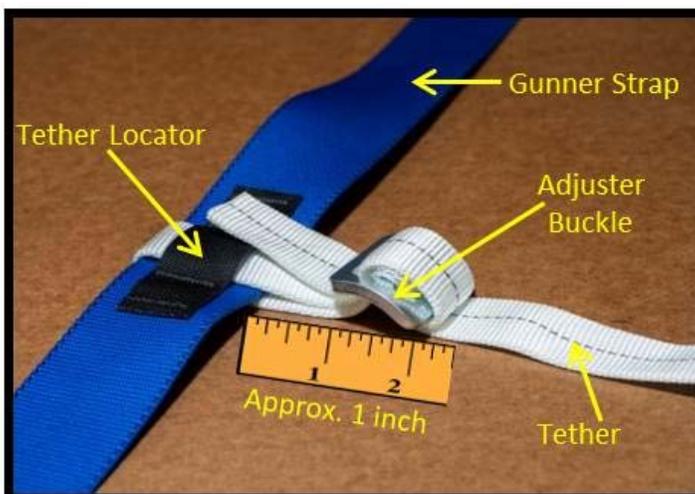
These gunner straps provide adequate safety when configured properly (Figure 1), but possess catastrophic consequences if they are not. The new design (Figure 2) eliminates the potential for improper rigging/configuration. The rappel community has already received newly designed straps specific to Bell medium helicopters and are NOT included in this recall.

The NTDP, in conjunction with the Interagency Aerial Ignition Group and National Rappel Program, have modified the attachment of the tether portion to the gunner strap (Figure 2). The new design contains a tether permanently attached to the gunner strap with the adjustable portion connecting to the aircraft anchor using a carabiner.

This recall includes all gunner straps used on rappel training towers, aerial ignition, and any other doors-off helicopter operations including those distributed in 2017.

Figure 1. Proper configuration of current gunner straps

Figure 2. New configuration of gunner straps



All gunner straps will be inspected, retrofitted with the new tether design and returned. If they do not meet current inspection standards or are more than 10 years old, they will be replaced at no charge.

Please return gunner straps as soon as practical as NTDP will be unable to accommodate any exchanges beyond **October 31, 2017**.

Send gunner straps to:

NTDP Rappel Equipment Specialist
5785 Hwy 10 West, Missoula, MT 59808

Remember to include a contact name, phone number and physical shipping address for return items.

Please direct any questions to Kevin Brown, NTDP Rappel Equipment Specialist at kkbrown@fs.fed.us or 406-329-3958

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