

# Inspecting fall arrest equipment made from webbing or rope



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The inspection regime recommended in this leaflet has been discussed with representatives of manufacturers, suppliers, installers and major users via the British Standards Institution Technical Committee PH/5 (industrial safety belts and harnesses), the British Safety Industry Federation Height Safety Group and the Work at Height Safety Association.

Employers should establish a regime for the inspection of lanyards that is drawn up by a competent person. The regime should include:

- the lanyards to be inspected (including their unique identification);
- the frequency and type of inspection (pre-use checks, detailed inspection and, where appropriate, interim inspection);
- designated competent persons to carry out the inspections;
- action to be taken on finding defective lanyards;
- means of recording the inspections;
- training of users; and
- a means of monitoring the inspection regime to verify inspections are carried out accordingly.

It is essential that the person carrying out any inspection is sufficiently independent and impartial to allow them to make objective decisions, and has appropriate and genuine authority to discard defective lanyards. This does not mean that competent persons must necessarily be employed from an external company, although many manufacturers and/or suppliers offer inspection services and training in the inspection of their products.

Employers may wish to provide additional lanyards to use as replacements in the event that defective lanyards have to be taken out of use.

Lanyards that are on hire may need special consideration, to ensure that they are subject to detailed inspections (and interim inspections if appropriate) within the



## When to Withdraw

Lanyards should be withdrawn from use and passed to a competent person for a detailed inspection to decide whether they should continue to be used, destroyed or returned to the manufacturer for testing\* to enable a product performance history to be determined, if:

- there is no evidence that a lanyard has been inspected by a competent person within the last six months;
- identification is not evident (lanyards should be indelibly and permanently marked in accordance with BS EN 365:2004. They should be uniquely identifiable so that they can be easily associated with their respective inspection documentation);
- a lanyard is still in use and marked to the old British Standard BS 1397:1979 *Specification for industrial safety belts, harnesses and safety lanyards* (ie pre CE-marking);
- a lanyard is thought to be defective, or if there is any doubt about its safety after a pre-use check or interim inspection.

A lanyard should be withdrawn from service immediately and destroyed or returned to the manufacturer.

## Examples of damaged lanyards

The following photographs show lanyards that have been withdrawn because of damage suffered during use.

W e b b i n g : W e b b i n g c o n t a m i n a t i o n  
**WEBBING STITCHING HARDWARE**

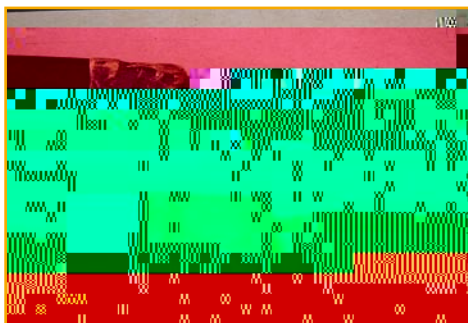


Figure 5 Two similar products with unknown history – the top webbing is heavily soiled



Figure 6 Heavy paint contamination to webbing

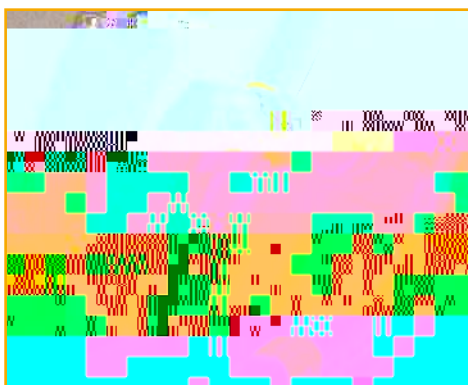


Figure 7 Damaged gate on karabiner

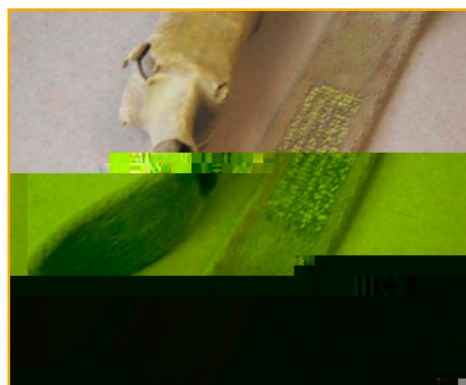


Figure 8 Missing label: damage to protective sleeve over energy absorber

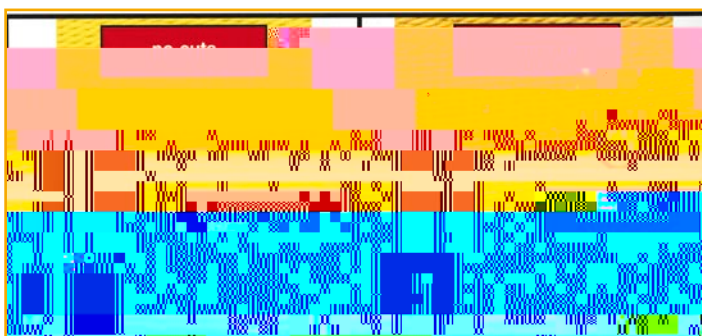


Figure 9 Size comparison of cuts to webbing. (Photos from research on new webbing)

## Further Information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit [www.hse.gov.uk/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/). You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

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