



RIGGING ADVISORY CIRCULAR

Issue Date: 01 May 1998

RAC No. 322 Rev. C

SUBJECT: PARACHUTE CANOPIES AND COMPONENTS SUBJECT TO DETERIORATION DUE TO ACID MESH

STATUS: MANDATORY

IDENTIFICATION: All canopies and parachute components that incorporate mesh in their construction.

BACKGROUND: In 1987, some reserve canopies were discovered with fabric of severely degraded strength. Investigation showed that the degradation was caused by acid, thought to be derived from the decay of a fire retardant used to treat the mesh used in the modifications. Following the original discovery, the problem has been identified in many canopy types and in pilot chutes manufactured by several different companies.

These include: Pioneer Parachute Company, GQ Security, GQ Parachutes Ltd, the Eagle Parachute Inc. and National Parachute Industries.

APF POLICY: All canopies and components that incorporate mesh in their construction are, as each inspection and repack, to be subjected to the tests described in RAC 213 and RAC 214 for fabric strength and acid contamination. These tests are to be carried out on the fabric which, when the parachute is packed, is in contact with the mesh of the modifications. This involves strength and acid tests on the fabric of six panels of a reserve canopy.

A canopy or component which fails either of the tests is to have the TSO or other approval marking removed or obliterated and the item must be removed from service.

Packers and Riggers should note that these tests for fabric strength and acid contamination are to be performed every 6 months, or more frequently if so required by the manufacturer, prior to the item being put back into service.

A GQ Security Aero Conical (SAC) canopy which has previously had the TSO marking removed or obliterated under the provisions of RAC 314 Rev. C but which passes the tests described in RAC 213 and RAC 214 may have the TSO marking restored and may be returned to service.



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Where the manufacturer of a canopy or component incorporating mesh in its construction imposes a more stringent requirement, or requirements in excess of that required by this RAC, both the requirements of this RAC and the manufacturer's requirement are to be adhered to

So that the APF can continue to monitor this problem, Packers and Riggers who find a canopy or component affected by acid mesh should inform the Director Rigging on a Equipment Defect form (see RAC 212).

COMPLIANCE DATE: Immediately

AUTHORITY: APF Director Rigging

DISTRIBUTION: All APF Packers and Riggers
Civil Aviation Authority, Airworthiness Engineering Section
Gliding Federation of Australia