



# SAFETY NOTICE

Issued by Angus Pinkerton - Chairman of the Flying & Safety Committee, 1 September 2000

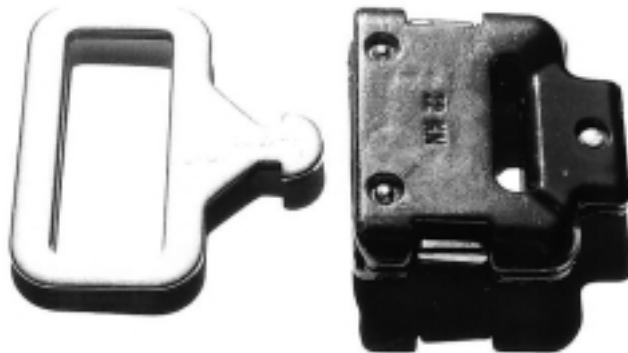
*All pilots must READ, DIGEST AND TAKE ACTION on the contents of this Notice and keep it for future reference.*

*If you hold a copy of the BHPA Technical Manual this notice must be inserted into it and retained until it is withdrawn or superseded on instructions from the Chairman FSC.*

## HARNESS BUCKLES

Further investigation of the buckle problem with Apco and System X harnesses has led us to extend the advice given in Safety Notice SN23-04/00. The affected buckles, most of which are purple, are stamped 12kN and are used by Apco on the Contour harness and System X on the Jet harness. However the affected buckles may not all be purple, and the above-named harnesses may not be the only ones affected.

If you have a buckle similar to the one illustrated in the photograph you should examine it very carefully to see if any combination of loading, twisting and pulling can make it disengage. With the buckle held in front of your chest as it would be with a fastened paraglider harness chest or leg strap, apply a considerable force trying to pull the male end out of the female. Whilst maintaining this loading, try to pivot the male end out of engagement, using up-and-down movements replicating the loading and movement on a paraglider chest strap when the pilot weight shifts or puts their legs down for landing. Try several times. The tensile force required is approximately 4 - 12kg.



Any buckle that does come undone should be replaced before further flight. Consult the harness manufacturer about this. A BHPA Incident Report Form should be submitted (see also 'Safety Matters' September 1999 and November 1998).

Pilots should be aware that, in the long term, mistreatment, wear, corrosion or contamination may result in quick-release buckles becoming faulty. These type of buckles are used in both hang gliding and paragliding harnesses, and pilots should incorporate into their pre-flight checks a 'pull apart and wiggle' check to make sure all buckles are securely fastened.