

## Harness Pole Strap Snap Hook

This hazard alert is issued to inform persons involved in working at height: including company principals and other persons that are responsible for employees; riggers and scaffolders; linesman; and other workers using harnesses to safely perform their duties.

### Background

ACT WorkCover has received notification of a dangerous occurrence involving the use of a light-weight alloy double action snap hook on a linesmen's pole strap (see Figure 1). The pole strap conforms to AS/NZS 1891.1 1995 – *Industrial fall arrest systems and devices - Part 1: Safety belts and harnesses*.

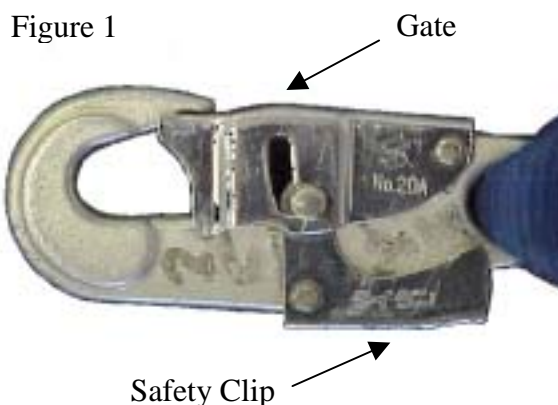


Figure 2 Safety Clip opened



The pole strap snap hook became jammed between the pole and the linesmen's body, inadvertently opening both safety clip and gate. The open snap hook unclipped from the safety harness "D" ring. The safety clip can also be opened by swivelling the harness. (See Figure 2)

The potential consequence of this dangerous occurrence could be a fatal fall. The safety features of this snap hook may fail if the snap hook becomes caught between the user and another surface or object. This safety snap hook design may be unsuitable for some work environments.

### Duties under the ACT Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989* (the Act) imposes a duty of care upon all parties to take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that plant and equipment used in the workplace do not present risks to health or safety. Penalties exist for breaches of the Act.



## **Preventative Measures**

To prevent serious injury or death, it is essential that hazard identification, risk assessment, and control measures be undertaken of all lanyards and pole straps. If the risk assessment shows that the work tasks and work environment could potentially cause the gate to open, then control processes must be implemented.

This may require replacement with alternative equipment. This equipment could include a safety clip that has a guard fitted or a design that prevents inadvertent opening of the gate in the work environment.

The measures should also include review of usage, maintenance and training procedures to ensure they comply with manufacturers/suppliers instructions and relevant Standards such as AS/NZS 1891.4 2000 – *Industrial fall arrest systems and devices - Part 4: Selection, use and maintenance*.

## **For Further Information**

Standards Australia publications can be ordered by phone, fax, e-mail or mail order:

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You can contact ACT WorkCover if you require further information. (See contact details on page 1.)