



# PARACHUTE PACKING ISSUES

Naval Safety Command (NAVSAFECOM) Assessment teams are seeing parachute packing discrepancies that could lead to injury or death. In such a risky environment, the following discrepancies are unacceptable.

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## PARACHUTE PACKING DISCREPANCIES

NAVSAFECOM discovered multiple instances in which parachutes were packed improperly. The Navy Airborne Operations Program Assessments team identified deviations in proper parachute packing procedures.

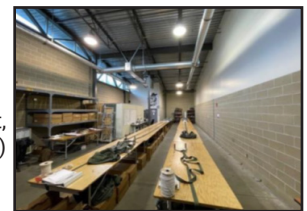
### From packed and ready-for-issue parachutes:

- Three cotton webbing ties on one parachute were incorrectly secured by not completing locking knots for the left and right riser connector links and the canopy apex deployment bag.
- Two parachutes from the same command had suspension line twists (1 full twist and 3 full twists).
- One parachute was packed with a damaged gore panel.

These were severe deviations from packing procedures that could have resulted in catastrophic events such as partial or total malfunction affecting deployment sequence, main parachute partial collapse or not attaining full inflation if our assessors had not identified them. These scenarios would have most likely resulted in activation of the reserve parachute, which comes with its own challenges and dangers, such as the reserve becoming entangled in the main chute resulting in neither chute opening properly or at all. Parachutists should never have to use their reserve because of a packing mistake.

## POSSIBLE FACTORS

- Packing in areas without sufficient lighting (a discrepancy noted at several USMC units).
- Distractions such as conversations, loud music, etc.
- Rushing the job due to uncomfortable environment (hot, cold, etc.), perceived pressure, racing against the clock or others, end of the day/week, etc.
- Insufficiently trained personnel.



Paraloft,  
(right)

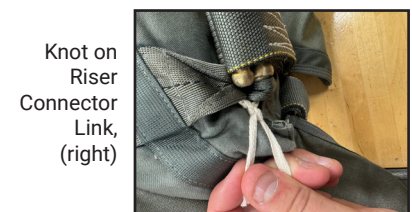
## NAVSAFECOM RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. Reduce distractions and do not rush these lifesaving steps.
2. Ensure Quality Assurance (QA) Inspectors are conducting all QA checks.
3. Research obtaining additional personnel support.
4. Conduct self-assessment and self-correction. These are concepts that must be embraced by all commands to "get real (self-assess) and get better (self-correct)" to protect our warfighters and preserve warfighting capability.
5. Chain of command: support any additional training needed to ensure all personnel who lay hands on parachutes have the education, tools and time to ensure these lifesaving devices are packed per applicable instructions – first time, every time.

The goal is always zero discrepancies; help us help you by passing the word and raising awareness up and down the chain.



Knot on  
Canopy  
Deployment  
Bag,  
(left)



Knot on  
Riser  
Connector  
Link,  
(right)



NAVAL SAFETY COMMAND  
Expeditionary & Special Warfare Directorate  
Jump Safety Division  
Phone: (757) 444-3520, ext. 7842  
DSN 564-3520