

IMPORTANT NOTICE

In the past few months a disturbing trend has reared its ugly head. Pilots are attaching their SPOT locator beacons or other survival kits (like the SMAK Pak) to their harnesses in potentially dangerous areas. Never attach anything to your harness without consulting your parachute rigger.

If an emergency arose and required the use of your parachute, this could very easily lead to a malfunction during deployment. It's already a bad day if you have to use your parachute. Don't make it worse by attaching your locator beacon to an area of your harness that could prevent your parachute from deploying properly. You should **NEVER** attach anything in the shoulder area. The risers (see Figure 1) must not be restricted from fully deploying.

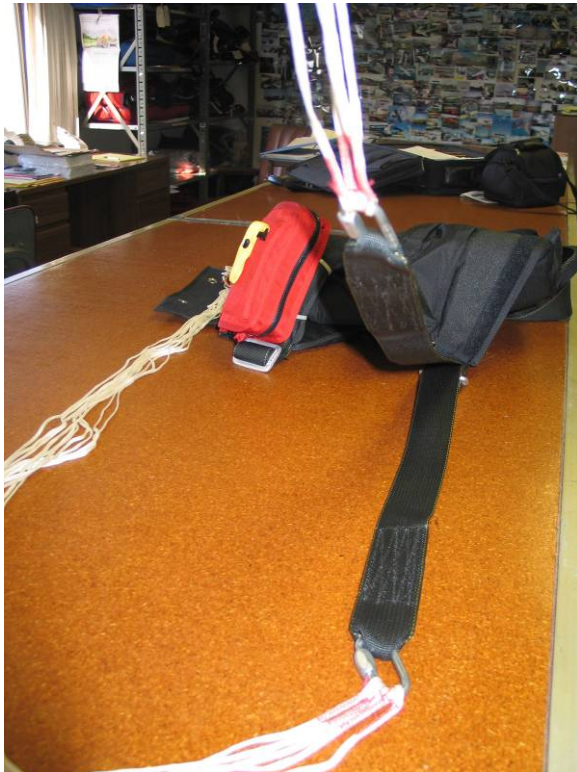


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows the riser (the webbing that holds the suspension lines of your parachute) and a kit attached incorrectly over the riser and the riser cover (see Figure

2). Hopefully, it would break free during deployment and the riser cover would be able to open, releasing the riser and allowing your chute to fully deploy. Of course, if it does break the plastic ties, you've lost your survival kit/locator beacon, but at least you're alive. I'm fairly certain that in this scenario the riser would not be able to spread apart properly as shown in Figure 1. This would more than likely put the parachute (and you) into an unrecoverable spin that could cause serious injury or worse.



Figure 2

The next example shows a SPOT Satellite Personal Tracker (see Figures 3 & 4) that came into my shop attached directly to the riser cover that runs over the top of your shoulder. The area it covered (see Figure 5 where I'm pointing) must be able to spread apart like in Figure 1. This was another potential accident waiting to happen.

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Figure 3



Figure 4

Each of you can help. If you see anyone with locator beacons, survival kits, rifles or the kitchen sink attached in the shoulder area of their parachute, explain the dangers and tell them to contact their parachute rigger. Don't use the chute until it has been checked.

The use of personal locator beacons or my SMAK Pak survival kit (with or without a locator beacon inside) can add to your safety, but you **MUST** have them installed properly. Don't get creative and think you're saving a buck by installing it yourself. Most parachute riggers will probably assist you for free. After all, we want you to survive so we can collect our bottle of spirits for a job well done if you ever have to use your parachute in an emergency.

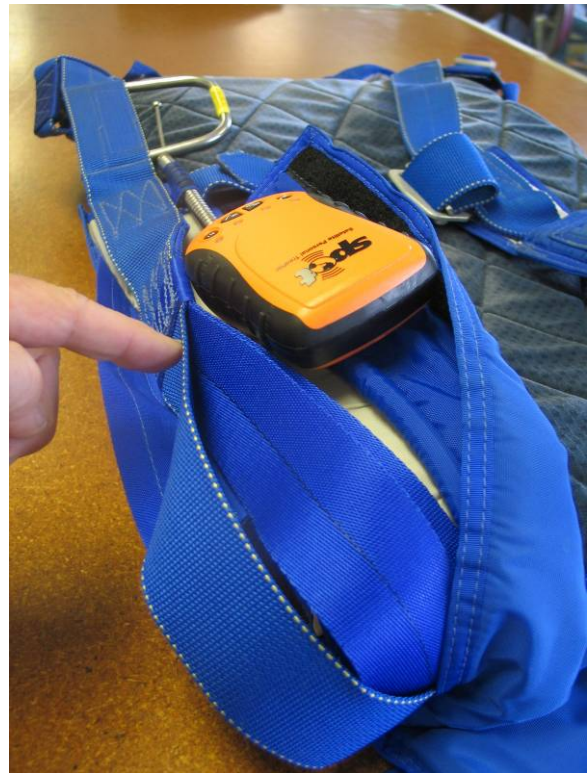


Figure 5