

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.177

National Policy

Effective Date:
1/6/12

Cancellation Date:
1/6/13

SUBJ: Parachute Sealing Procedure Clarification

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice provides guidance for aviation safety inspectors (ASI) assigned to conduct oversight under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 91 and 14 CFR part 105, § 105.43(b) concerning the use of a paper seal in lieu of a lead-type seal for sealing a packed parachute.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) ASIs assigned to conduct oversight under part 91 and § 105.43(b). The secondary audience includes Flight Standards Service (AFS) branches and divisions in the regions and in headquarters (HQ).

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee Web site at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators can find this notice on the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Web site at <http://fsims.faa.gov>. This notice is available to the public at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.

4. Background.

a. History. Some parachute riggers outside the United States use paper seals in lieu of lead-type seals. This has led to FAA-certificated parachute riggers raising the question of whether they too can use the paper seal in lieu of the lead seal.

b. Maintenance. When packing the parachute, the parachute rigger is performing maintenance on a Technical Standard Order (TSO) product that falls under 14 CFR part 43, § 43.13 regarding maintenance performance rules, and as such, "Each person performing maintenance, alteration, or preventive maintenance on an aircraft, engine, propeller, or appliance shall use the methods, techniques, and practices prescribed in the current manufacturer's maintenance manual or Instructions for Continued Airworthiness prepared by its manufacturer, or other methods, techniques, and practices acceptable to the Administrator...."

c. Regulation. Title 14 CFR part 65, § 65.133 states, "Each certificated parachute rigger must have a seal with an identifying mark prescribed by the Administrator, and a seal press. After

packing a parachute, he shall seal the pack with his seal in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendation for that type of parachute."

d. Parachute Rigger Handbook. When the manufacturer has not provided concise guidance, the Administrator provides guidance in FAA-H-8083-17, Parachute Rigger Handbook, as an acceptable method of sealing the parachute.

5. Action. ASIs should review the guidance provided in this notice and remain alert while performing oversight of parachute riggers for whom they are responsible. ASIs should understand that § 65.133 is interpreted as meaning that the certificated parachute rigger must seal the parachute with a lead-type seal. Paper seals are not authorized to be used by certificated parachute riggers. ASIs should be aware that a situation may exist during surveillance that would allow a foreign parachutist to have a paper-sealed parachute when packed in accordance with the parachutist's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) requirements. See § 105.49(a)(4)(ii).

6. Disposition. We will incorporate the information in this notice into FAA Order 8900.1. Direct questions or comments concerning this notice to the General Aviation Branch (AFS-350) at 202-385-6400.



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