

Product Safety Recall

30/07/10

SpanSet K4 karabiners. Batch No 100329

SpanSet Australia advises all users of SpanSet K4 triple action karabiners to remove them from service and return them to the distributor from whom they were purchased, or to SpanSet Australia Ltd for replacement.

Recently SpanSet Australia investigated the breakage of a 30kn (3000kg) karabiner (SpanSet part code K4) that was used to connect a synthetic safety line which was then tensioned and left overnight. Prior to commencement of work the next day an inspection found the karabiner had broken along the major axis spine, at the receptor hole for the lanyard/webbing retaining pin. SpanSet were given verbal assurance of the correct use by the operator and that only 150kg had been applied to the line.

Findings to date

Internal and external tests on the same batch revealed a consistent tensile strength well in excess of the rated capacity – almost double. This was also verified by the supplier and SpanSet routine batch tests.

The steel chemical analysis of the raw material batch was within specification.

The component manufacturer is ISO9001, UKAS and CE certified

The pretension of the SpanSet high performance ratchet of the safety line is known to be between 600 and 1000 KGF not 150kg as reported, and therefore no “hairline” crack was possible as it was tensioned initially without incident.

The webbing retaining pin was not in place in the karabiner

The karabiner was fitted with a 16kN (1600kg) gate mechanism

SpanSet Australia was able to reproduce a near identical break in laboratory conditions but only with the gate open at 25kN

The karabiner has been sent for a full metallurgical failure analysis

60% of the batch of 4,000 has been proof tested to 16kN with zero failures

After exhaustive testing SpanSet Australia has been unable to completely rule out the description of events provided by the operator and will need to rely on the metallurgical failure analysis to be able to state what exactly caused the breakage of the karabiner. Unfortunately this may take up to six weeks, **leaving SpanSet Australia Ltd with no option other than to issue a national recall of this component and any products fitted with this component.**

The affected products can be identified by the karabiner carrying the batch number 100329. This is the only affected component.



Photo of the affected component and batch number

Users have the option of removing the karabiner and returning it to the supplier or SpanSet Australia Ltd for a replacement, or returning the complete product for re-fitting of the newly tested component.

All replacement karabiners will carry the same batch number with a laser etched marking "Tested 8/10" on the top section of the karabiner. This indicates that the component has been proof loaded to 16kN and safe to use. This exceeds the requirements of AS/NZS 1891.1

SpanSet is in the process of writing to the affected distributors with details of purchases and instructions.

This recall has been lodged with the ACCC - PRA number: 2010/11857 and can be viewed on their website

SpanSet Australia Ltd undertakes to publish the results of the metallurgical tests when available, irrespective of the result, and invites any scrutiny, inspection, or audit by our supplier partners or end user customers at any time.

SpanSet regrets the obvious inconvenience and concern this issue may cause and has taken this decision in the interests of Workplace Health and Safety without commercial bias.

See www.recalls.gov.au for Australian Product Recall Information
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