



# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

## **MARINE SAFETY ALERT**

### ***Inspections and Compliance Directorate***

August 19, 2015  
Washington, D1C

Safety Alert 07-15

## **PREVENT PARASAIL ACCIDENTS**

### ***Follow ASTM Standards and manufacturer instructions!***

This Safety Alert serves as a reminder to owners, operators and crewmembers working on all parasail vessels to review equipment instructions and usage limitations. Significant hazards leading to injury or death may occur if the equipment is used improperly. The Coast Guard does not regulate parasail equipment, parasail operational procedures or mechanical systems used during parasailing. This is a reminder to owners, operators and crewmembers of their important responsibilities.

This alert focuses on the proper fitting of the “seat type” body harness, which is used to support a parasail passenger while in flight. The seat of the harness is constructed of a band of high strength material. These harnesses are typically produced in a range of sizes to support children and adults. They are designed to be used with U.S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFD). The preferred type of PFD for parasailing is a vest style having flotation padding front and back and a number of securing straps. PFDs of the horseshoe style that fit around a passenger’s neck and in front are less desired.

Manufacturer harness product information, safety data regarding the fitting of harnesses from industry associations, and the ASTM International Standard Practices for Parasailing F-3099-14 each indicate the following:

## **HARNESS WAIST STRAP MUST FIT AROUND THE PASSENGER’S WAIST AND NOT OVER THE LIFE JACKET (OR PFD).**

The references also state that when fitting a passenger into the harness, its back strap must be above the user’s hips. The waist strap must then be made tight and the straps should not be able to move over and below the hips. The strap should be tight to prevent the passenger from sliding out of the harness and keep the person correctly positioned on the seat of the harness. No additional information has been found to suggest different methods to fit seat type harnesses.

The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that owners, operators and crewmembers of parasail vessels thoroughly examine:

- The ASTM “Standard Practices for Parasailing F-3099-14. This standard addresses Weather, Equipment, Operations, Crew Requirements and Patron Responsibilities. It is available here: <http://www.astm.org/Standards/F3099.htm> .
- Related equipment manufacturer instructions (harnesses, chutes, winch, etc.).
- Instructions and procedures regarding fitting passengers into harnesses to ensure the proper positioning of the harness on the wearer.



**ASTM Standards and harness manufacturers recommend fitting the waist strap around the waist as depicted above.**



**ASTM Standards and harness manufacturers DO NOT recommend fitting parasailing waist straps above the PFD as depicted above.**

This safety alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve or create any domestic or international safety, operational or material requirement. Developed by Coast Guard Eighth District Prevention, Sector St. Petersburg Investigation Division, Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance, and the Office of Investigations and Casualty Analysis, Washington, DC. Questions may be addressed to [HQS-PF-fldr-CG-INV@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-PF-fldr-CG-INV@uscg.mil). Distributed by the Office of Investigations and Casualty Analysis, Washington DC.