

MIRAGE SYSTEMS, INC.

PRODUCT SERVICE BULLETIN No. 03-11

DATE: 24 MARCH 2011

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SUBJECT: Suspension of approval for the installation and use of an Aviacom SA/NV ARGUS® AAD in Mirage Systems, Inc. harness and container assemblies.

AFFECTED PRODUCTS: All Mirage and RTS harness and container models

COMPLIANCE: **MANDATORY**

BACKGROUND: Over the past three years, and in particular in the last several months, there have been documented reports from the field of the Argus® AAD failing to cut through the reserve closing loop when fired. Aviacom SA/NV, the manufacturer of the Argus® AAD, has been contacted concerning these incidents and, to the best of our knowledge, has not identified the root cause of the problem, nor have they developed a solution.

It is possible that the design of the Argus® AAD cutter is such that it could interfere with, or prevent, manual activation of the reserve parachute system when the cutter is located above the reserve pilot chute, as it is in Mirage container systems. If the AAD cutter fails to cut through the reserve closing loop, it could possibly trap the closing loop inside the cutter and prevent the release of the reserve pilot chute, even if the ripcord is subsequently pulled.

There is a field report stating that a pilot chute came out unexpectedly on the ground after the Argus® AAD had fired but failed to cut through the reserve closing loop on a Mirage. This incident identifies a second, potentially more serious safety issue: *A partially cut loop could go un-noticed and cause an unwanted reserve deployment on a later jump.* An unexpected reserve deployment at the wrong time could result in the serious injury or death of the jumper, other jumpers in freefall or onboard the jump aircraft, the pilot, and even persons on the ground.

Considering the serious nature of these potential scenarios, Mirage Systems, Inc. is hereby suspending approval of the installation or use of Argus® AADs in all models of our harness and container systems. This action is in effect immediately and will remain in effect until such time as Aviacom SA/NV has identified the root cause of the cutter failure mode, and has proven to our satisfaction that the Argus® AAD cutter has been redesigned and thoroughly tested to resolve these failures.

14 CFR Part 65.129(e) states that "No certificated parachute rigger may pack, maintain, or alter a parachute in any manner that deviates from the procedures approved by the administrator or the manufacturer of the parachute." Effective immediately, Mirage Systems, Inc. no longer approves any procedures to install the Aviacom SA/NV Argus® AAD in any Mirage System, Inc. harness and container assembly, and hereby suspends any procedures previously approved. It could now be a violation of 14 CFR Part 65.129(e) if a certificated parachute rigger were to pack any model of a Mirage Systems, Inc. harness and container system with an Aviacom SA/NV Argus® AAD installed. It could also be a violation of 14 CFR Part 65.129(b), if, because of the installation of an Argus® AAD, a parachute were to be deemed by the FAA to not be safe for emergency use.

SERVICE BULLETIN: All users of a Mirage Systems, Inc. harness and container assembly equipped with an Aviacom SA/NV Argus® AAD should immediately remove the Argus® AAD prior to making ANY further jumps. Failure to do so could result in serious injury or death.

COMPLIANCE DATE: 24 MARCH 2011

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