

# VIGIL AAD

## SERVICE BULLETIN #4

**Date** : 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007  
**Subject** : Vigil New Stainless Steel Cutter Damaging the Loops by the Sharp Internal Edge on  $\pm$  10% Cutters Delivered from March 2007.  
**Identification** : Any stainless steel cutter having a manufacture date of 03/07

Dear Vigil users,

Last month, we were advised by several customers that damage had occurred to some reserve closing loops while closing the reserve container. Last week 2 broken loops on Tandem rigs were reported, one in Laon and one in Vannes (France). We also received reports from the USA of two similar incidents. In all those cases a full stainless steel new cutter (dated 03-07), placed above the pilot chute was involved. This occurred even though the test carried out on every cutter before shipment, including a friction test with a test loop. We want to state that no fault was detected even on the 2 cutters returned to us. We stated different external rounding and some internal edges but not to cut a loop.

Despite our stringent test procedures on all incoming components and multiple tests on all cutters of the 400 new stainless steel cutters delivered to our customers are involved. On the 200 still in stock, approximately 10% have some internal edges. This only concerns deliveries of March and April 2007. For safety reason we decide to advise riggers to take attention by using those cutters and to reject any cutter damaging the loop. It is not excluded that those damages are the result of a friction or a wedging of the loop between two hard stainless steel metal parts (cutter & grommet).

Last week, we contacted our cutter supplier, a USA factory, recognized as one of the leading cutter manufacturers in the world. They have patented and produced cutters since the sixties and supplied us more than 6000 cutters to the satisfaction of our customers.

To be able to fulfill our increased demand due to the exchange of cutters with plastic protection ring to the full stainless steel ones they ordered cutter bodies produced by another factory without advising us of the change.

We are very sorry for any inconveniences that this will bring you. But safety is always our first priority. This policy obliges us to stop all shipments of any new stainless steel cutter as long as this problem is not clarified and resolved to our satisfaction.

At this time we are not able to confirm when cutters will be supplied. We can only mention that the USA factory confirmed that the best production cycle for new cutters will be at least of 6 weeks.

In the meantime, we propose our customers who use the affected cutters (manufactured and delivered by us in March or April 2007 to supply our previous cutters (with the plastic protection rings) with new plastic inserts for the time being.

For your information, we have never experienced a broken closing loop caused by the plastic protection rings, therefore we continue to analyze the reason of this incident and will advise soon, a final statement will then be established.

It is mandatory for Vigil users to open the reserve that has new cutters supplied in March and April 07 and to inspect the loop for damage. If any damage to the loop is found on the place it is mandatory to stop using this cutter and to send us a report at [info@vigil.aero](mailto:info@vigil.aero).

**Action:** this check is mandatory before the next jump for all the new AAD's cutters supplied in March and April 2007 with the production **dates 03-07-** (followed by batch nr 1, 2 or 3) on the body of the cutter. These need to be changed if damage to the reserve closing loop is found where it comes in contact with the cutter.

For detailed exchanging procedure please contact you local dealer or [info@vigil.aero](mailto:info@vigil.aero)

  
Jo Smolders  
Managing Director  
Advanced Aerospace Designs