



AHG 2 1 2012

Mr. Randy Ottinger Director of Government Relations United States Parachute Association 5401 Southpoint Centre Boulevard Fredericksburg, VA 22407

Dear Mr. Ottinger:

This letter is in response to your request for clarification regarding parachute manufacturers establishing a service life beyond the requirements of the Technical Standard Order (TSO) which the parachute was built (TSO-C23b, dated March 29 1962). Members of USPA also maintain that since TSO-C23b, TSO-C23c, and TSO-C23d did not establish a service life, a rigger may extend the life of the system 180 days at a time.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) considers the service life recommended by the manufacturer, a non regulatory requirement for a parachute that meets the standards of TSO-C23b, TSO-C23c, TSO-C23d, and sold before a service life was established.

To hold a parachute owner to a newly established service life required by the manufacturer of a parachute, the manufacturer issues a Service Bulletin with safety concerns and recommends the FAA issue an Airworthiness Directive to establish a regulatory service life.

Thank you for your interest in aviation safety.

Sincerely,

Steven W. Douglas

Manager, Aircraft Maintenance Division