



Mine Safety Appliances Company • P.O. Box 426 • Pittsburgh, PA 15230

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Writers Direct Dial No.

User Notice
AirFrame™ Carrier & Harness Assembly
used on Firehawk™ Air Masks

January 31, 2005

Dear Firehawk Air Mask User,

MSA recently received a report that the cylinder retaining band on an AirFrame Carrier & Harness Assembly became loose and permitted the cylinder to separate from the carrier. The user was not injured; however, our investigation revealed that the potential for similar occurrences exists if using an AirFrame Carrier & Harness Assembly. The AirFrame Carrier & Harness Assembly is used on Firehawk Air Masks and can be distinguished by its large side handles (see Figure A). Please determine if your air mask uses this carrier and if so, take the corrective action indicated below.

We have determined that if the slot in the carrier permits the two spring ends near the cylinder band latch to separate (see Figure B), the cylinder retaining band can become loose. To correct this condition, we are making available a special lock-washer to users of affected AirFrame Carrier & Harness Assemblies. The lock-washer requires no special tools or training for installation and when properly installed, the washer will prevent the two spring ends from separating. This User Notice applies to AirFrame Carriers manufactured from May 2004 through December 2004 only. AirFrame Carriers manufactured after December 2004 include a narrower slot that holds the spring ends together (see Figure C) and requires no retrofit.

Please determine the quantity of lock-washers required - one lock-washer is needed for each carrier & harness assembly. Please contact MSA Customer Service at 1-877-MSA-3473 to obtain the lock-washer (P/N 10062951) and install according to the attached instructions. If you prefer, you may contact your local MSA authorized distributor or MSA certified CARE technician to perform this retrofit.

We regret any inconvenience this situation may cause; however, it is important that we take this preventive measure to address this potential safety concern. If you have any questions, please contact MSA Fire Service Technical Support 1-877-MSA-3473.

Very truly yours,

Charles J. Seibel, Jr.
Manager of Product Safety

PPL04046-01

LOCATION: RIDC Industrial Park • 121 Gamma Drive • Pittsburgh, PA 15238

How to identify the AirFrame Carrier and determine if it requires this retrofit:

AirFrame Carrier – can be distinguished by its large side handles

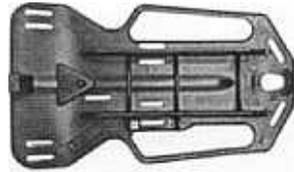


Figure A

If the slot in the carrier is wide enough so that the two spring ends near the cylinder band latch are separated or could become separated, the carrier requires this retrofit. These carriers were manufactured from May 2004 through December 2004.

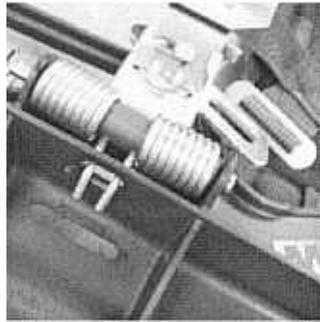


Figure B

If the slot in the carrier is narrow so that the two spring ends near the cylinder band latch can not separate, this retrofit is not required. These carriers were manufactured after December 2004.

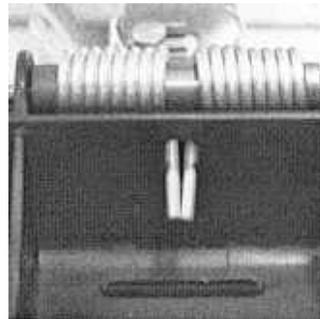
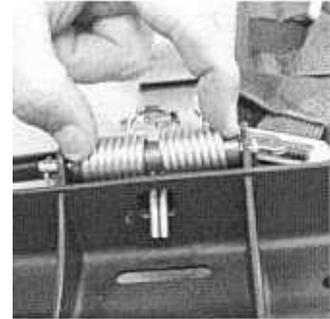


Figure C

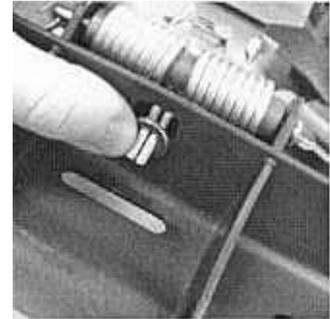
If your carrier requires this retrofit, contact MSA Customer Service at 1-877-MSA-3473 and obtain the appropriate number of lock-washers (P/N 10062951) and install as follows:

1. Remove the cylinder from the carrier and unlatch the cylinder band at the cylinder sizing tab, opposite the latch mechanism. *(as always, be sure to wear safety glasses)*
2. If there is a gap between the latch-springs, continue with step 3. If there is no gap, continue with step 4.

3. Slide the latch-springs together. Note: Sliding the latch-springs together may require the use of both hands or pliers.



4. Slide the lockwasher (P/N 10062951) over the latch-spring "legs".



5. Lift the latch-spring "legs" slightly with a prybar or channel locks.



6. Slowly tip the backplate away from you and allow the lockwasher to fall into the backplate slot. The washer should now be trapped between the carrier and the spring mechanism.



7. Re-attach the cylinder band to the adjustment tab on the opposite side of the carrier.