



### **IRATA Statement.**

In response to the Petzl 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012 statement on the use of the Petzl Shunt as a back-up device for industrial rope access.

IRATA acknowledges the conclusions drawn by Petzl in their statement on the use of the Petzl Shunt which can be viewed using the following link;-  
<http://www.petzl.com/en/pro/news-pro/2012/01/10/petzl-statement-special-use-petzl-shunt>

The Petzl statement highlights the well-known risks of misuse when performing a continuous descent whilst holding the cord should an incident occur, e.g. mainline failure, out of control descent.

IRATA has always acknowledged these risks and notes that Petzl's recommendation is not to use the Petzl Shunt as a backup device if it is towed with a cord during continuous descent.

It is the opinion of IRATA that this does not eliminate the use of the Shunt with a cord as a backup device during certain tasks and using specific methods of handling.

IRATA therefore recommends the following to IRATA members and IRATA technicians:

- **The shunt should not be used as a back-up device if it is to be continuously towed in descent** however it could be used as an independent device when operated separately from the main descender device.
- For 2 person rescue training if the Shunt is to be used it must be attached to a flexible device lanyard (dynamic cowstail) of no longer than 60cm (including connectors) if attached from the waist D ring or 40cm (including connectors) if attached to the sternal or chest attachment point. The Shunt must not be positioned lower than the top of the descending device during a two person rescue.
- Rope Access equipment should be selected that is specified for its intended purpose by the manufacturer.
- Risk assessments should be re-addressed for the use of the shunt as a back-up device to affirm that the risks set out in the Petzl statement have been considered.
- Manufacturers, including Petzl, acknowledge they may not be aware of all the various applications and methods therefore where IRATA members decide to develop any changes through innovation and outside the manufacturer's user instructions then there will be a need to demonstrate the performance and effectiveness of the methods being adopted for the specified application or method.
- Reference should be made to the ICOP section 2.7.1.1 and 2.7.7.5 for further guidance.

IRATA members, employers and users have final responsibility for the selection and correct use of equipment and should carefully read Petzl's statement and user instructions on the use of the Petzl Shunt and assess their liability in relation to the continued use in their system or changes to methods of use.

IRATA reminds members that training will be required to achieve the necessary competence in any new methods and/or equipment. Employers have the responsibility to ensure that operatives are competent in the use of equipment provided.

Where the use of new techniques or equipment has been implemented there should be a periodic review to ensure correct use in training and on site e.g. site audits.

Any changes in training and operations that will arise from this statement should accelerate innovation in both methods and equipment to improve the safety and effectiveness of the complete secondary system in industrial rope access.

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