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Contact: office@theuiaa.org
Tel: +41 (0) 31 370 1828

The International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation brings together millions of men, women and children joined by their passion for mountains.

PRESS RELEASE

Worldwide warning to users of via ferrata sets

13 September 2012, BERN, Switzerland: The UIAA - International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation is issuing a worldwide warning to users of via ferrata sets to check the websites of manufacturers in order to find out whether the unit they are using is safe.

The warning follows a fatal accident on 5 August 2012 on a via ferrata in the vicinity of Walchsee in Tirol, Austria where a climber fell several meters and both lanyards on the energy-absorbing devices (EAS), also known as klettersteig sets, broke.

The manufacturer of the set carried out an investigation after the accident. The probe found that the lanyard's strength was dramatically affected after intensive use not only because of its specific construction but also due to the material used.

UIAA Safety Commission decisions

A meeting of the Safety Commission took place on 6 September 2012 in Bern, Switzerland, to review the accident because the via ferrata unit involved met safety standards as set out by the UIAA Safety Commission. The meeting was attended by national delegates, representatives of 16 manufacturers and UIAA laboratories in France and the Czech Republic.

As a result of the meeting:

- Users are strongly advised to visit the website of the manufacturer to check if their via ferrata set is safe to use
- A decision was also made to review UIAA 128, the safety standard used to test via ferrata sets. The last review of this standard took place in 2008 when a wet test was added. The goal of the review is to update the existing standard for via ferrata sets that will include fatigue testing.

The companies that attended the UIAA Safety Commission meeting were DMM, Edelrid, Petzl, Skylotec, AustriAlpin, Mammut, Salewa, Climbing Technology, Grivel, Beal, Ocu, Lanex, Singing Rock, Camp Cassin and Simond.

The UIAA Safety Commission is made up national delegates from alpine clubs, manufacturers who submit to the UIAA Safety Standard and UIAA laboratories which conduct safety tests on behalf of the commission. The commission maintains [a database of certified equipment and recalls](#).

About the UIAA

The UIAA was founded in 1932 and has 80 member associations in 50 countries representing about 1.3 million people. The organization's mission is to promote the growth and protection of mountaineering and climbing worldwide, advance safe and ethical mountain practices and promote responsible access, culture and environmental protection.

The organization operates through the work of its commissions which make recommendations, set policy and advocate on behalf of the mountaineering community. The UIAA is recognized by the International Olympic Committee for mountaineering and natural surface climbing.

Press contacts:

Jean Franck Charlet
UIAA Safety Commission
safetylabel@theuiaa.org

Gurdeepak Ahuja
UIAA Office
gurdeepak.ahuja@theuiaa.org



UIAA - International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation
Monbijoustrasse 61 Postfach CH-3000 Bern 23 Switzerland

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UIAA | Monbijoustrasse 61 Postfach CH-3000 | Bern | Switzerland