



Forest Service Aviation TECH BULLETIN



No. FSTB 2011-02

Revised September 22, 2011

Page 1 of 1

Subject: SMC Carabiners

Area of Concern: Rappel Operations

Distribution: Rappel Bases

The Forest Service has used SMC carabiners in helicopter rappel operations for more than 15 years. The only carabiner model that is approved for use in rappel operations at this time is the SMC Lite Alloy Steel screwlock (bright) carabiner. **The SKU/model number for this carabiner on [SMC's website](#) is [NFPA 100001](#).**

The way to determine if a screwlock Lite Alloy Steel SMC carabiner is the correct model is to read the stamped information displayed on the side of the carabiner. On one side, it should read, "Meets NFPA 1983." Following the "Meets NFPA 1983" stamp, it should say either (2001 ED.) or (2006 ED.). Both the 2001 and 2006 editions of SMC screwlock carabiners are approved for use, as they are virtually identical except for the date stamp. After the date marking, the rest of the stamp should say "G SMC USA" followed by the Underwriter Laboratory (UL) symbol, Class MBS 40KN, and an alphanumeric lot number such as B082 (the lot number may differ but the carabiner is still an approved model if the date stamp is correct).

Some rappel bases may still have previous models of the SMC carabiner in their equipment inventories. SMC also sells several models of carabiners that are very similar in appearance to the model approved for Forest Service rappel operations, some of which function very much like the approved model.

If you have an SMC carabiner with any of the following features, the carabiner should be removed from service.

1. Says "Stainless" on one side
2. Has an autolock gate
3. Has a date stamp earlier than 2001
4. Does not have an NFPA 1983 stamp

Any questions, please contact the National Rappel Standardization Specialist at 208-387-5634

/s/ Ron Hanks

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