

# Safety Alert

**Number: 24-09**

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**Subject: Vessel Stretcher Breakage**

## What Happened / Narrative

A medevac from a vessel required the patient to be transferred to the hospital. The patient was to be moved from the stretcher (images below) to a hospital bed which was in the incline position. The stretcher was placed at the head of the bed on a diagonal until the head of the bed could be lowered. The stretcher subsequently cracked in two while in the diagonal position with the 65kg patient still on the stretcher.

This could have led to a more serious situation should the patient have been suffering from a back injury.

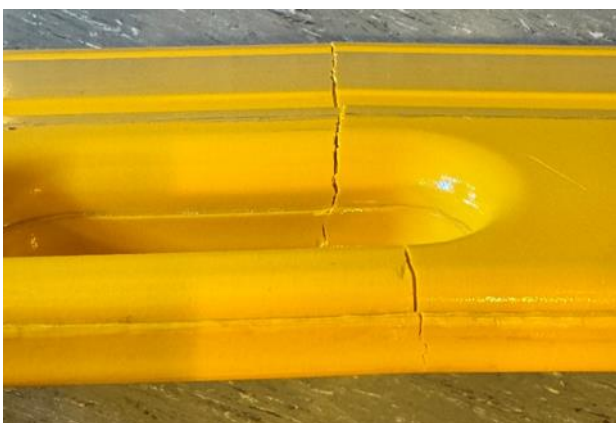
## Why Did it Happen / Cause

On investigation it was discovered that the stretcher was 13 years old. When the manufacturer was contacted about the incident, they advised that this type of stretcher has a 'life' of five years and then should be replaced (stretcher 'lives' may vary depending on type and manufacturer).

## Corrective Actions Taken / Recommendations

Stretchers should be examined and replaced if the shelf life has expired (this can be challenging as some manufacturers will not give a shelf life and advise that usage and visual examination will determine if the stretcher needs to be replaced or not).

## Photographs / Supporting Information



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