Precautionary Recall of Mammut Via Ferrata Sets with rope friction based shock absorbers

In the course of extensive tests on used via ferrata sets with rope friction based shock absorbers, Mammut has established that these systems could fail in the event of a fall. The tests have shown that increased impact force values can be generated in the event of a fall. In combination with a wear-related decrease in the strength of the carabiner arms, this could lead to the complete failure of the system. Potentially resulting in severe injuries or death.

The Mammut Sports Group has decided to remove all via ferrata sets rope friction based shock absorbers from the market with immediate effect, to eliminate any risk for end users. Mammut urgently calls for users to stop using the affected sets with immediate effect.

This affects all Mammut via ferrata sets with a rope friction based shock absorber. A detailed list of the affected products, and those that are not affected, can be found from page 3 onwards in this document.

Mammut will replace affected via ferrata sets that are less than 7 years old. In exchange, you will receive the latest generation Mammut Tec Step 2 via ferrata set, which complies with the new requirements of the TÜV and DAV (German alpine association).

Please send your Mammut via ferrata set to our customer service department:

For customers outside the EU and Switzerland:

Mammut Sports Group AG
Via Ferrata Recall
Birren 5
CH-5703 Seon

For customers within the EU:

Mammut Sports Group GmbH
Via Ferrata Recall
Mammut-Basecamp 1
D 87787 Wolfertschwenden

Please use the appropriate returns form when sending the product back. The replacement products will be available from April 2013. We will refund the postage costs for product returns.

Any via ferrata set that has exceeded the maximum recommended service life of 7 years must no longer be used. The Mammut Sports Group strongly urges the immediate disposal of any such sets. This recommended service life applies to all Mammut brand via ferrata sets, regardless of the type of product or its construction.
Please also note the recall of Mammut Tec Step sets with elastic lanyards of November 2012. For reasons of completeness, the sets affected by this recall are listed again on Page 4 of this document.

The Mammut Sports Group has set up a hotline to answer any further questions:
Email: viaferrata@mammut.ch
Tel: +41 (0)62 769 81 85 (office hours)

Please also refer to the list of FAQs starting on Page 7 of this document.

Kind regards,

Mammut Sports Group AG
Recall of rope friction based shock absorbers 2013

All the via ferrata sets affected by the recall have the same braking element construction (also used in the color "silver").

The following versions, which always have the same rope friction based shock absorbers, but may have different carabiners or carabiner arms, are affected:

2130-00030 Via Ferrata V
(until 2008 item numbers 1020494 and 1020514)

2130-00080 Via Ferrata Y
(until 2008 item numbers 1020494 and 1020514)

2130-00050 Via Ferrata Performance Key Lock
(until 2008 item number 1020534)
Recall of Elastic Lanyards 2012

The following Mammut Tec Step via ferrata sets are affected by the recall of via ferrata sets with elastic carabiner arms issued in October 2012.

These via ferrata sets have 18 mm wide, very ruffled elastic carabiner arms (other products with identical elastic carabiners arms are in circulation - see the list below).

Affected are the following products, with varying carabiners:

- **2130-00220 Tec Step Classic** also included in **2130-00210 Classic Via Ferrata Package**
- **2130-00230 Tec Step Bionic Turn**
- **2130-00240 Tec Step Bionic**
- **2130-00250 Tec Step Brenta Classic**
Via ferrata sets that are not affected

These more recent generation Tec Step 2 (in stores since January 13) sets are NOT affected by the two recall actions and can continue to be used.

The latest generation of Mammut Tec Step sets also has elastic carabiner arms. The newly developed elastic webbing complies with the latest safety research findings and meets the strength criteria specified by alpine associations and independent testing institutes. Mammut's new elastic carabiner arms offer an additional safety margin over and above these criteria.

The via ferrata sets that are NOT affected have 22 mm wide, highly and rather irregularly ruffled elastic carabiner arms.

These more recent generation Tec Step 2 (in stores since January 13) sets are NOT affected by the two recall actions and can continue to be used.

The Tec Step 2 is sold in the following versions with different carabiners:

- 2130-00260 Tec Step2 Bionic 2
- 2130-00280 Tec Step2 Bionic Turn 2
- 2130-00290 Tec Step2 Classic 2

WARNING

The maximum service life of any via ferrata set is 7 years. Older sets must be disposed of.
Via ferrata sets that are not affected

These earlier generation Tec Step sets are NOT affected by the two recall actions and can continue to be used (sold from 2007 until 2011).

The via ferrata sets that are NOT affected have 19 mm wide, only slightly ruffled elastic carabiner arms. These elastic carabiner arms comply with the current DAV safety research requirements for elastic webbing on via ferrata sets.

The Tec Step via ferrata sets that are not affected by the recall were sold in the following versions with different carabiners:

- 2130-00150 Tec Step Via Ferrata Brenta
- 2130-00160 Tec Step Via Ferrata Brenta Turn
- 2130-00170 Tec Step Via Ferrata Element
- 2130-00120 Tec Step Via Ferrata KL
- 2130-00130 Tec Step Via Ferrata Turn KL
- 1020536 Via Ferrata Turn Web Key Lock
- 1020535 Via Ferrata Step Web Key Lock

WARNING

The maximum service life of any via ferrata set is 7 years. Older sets must be disposed of.
Frequently Asked Questions

How can I find out whether my via ferrata set is affected by the recall?
The recall affects all via ferrata sets with a rope friction based shock absorber, and does not depend on a specific item name or batch number.

Can I carry on using my set? What happens if I don't want to send my set back, or want to keep it for a little longer?
Without exception, you must stop using the affected via ferrata sets immediately. If you have planned a via ferrata holiday before April, please contact our hotline:
Email: viaferrata@mammut.ch
Tel: +41 (0)62 769 81 85 (office hours)

How long will it take to exchange my set?
New sets will be available from April. When we receive your set, we will send you a confirmation letter including a delivery date for your free-of-charge replacement set.

Will my postage costs be reimbursed?
Yes, we will enclose a cash refund for the postage costs in the return parcel.

What is the maximum age up to which my via ferrata set can be replaced?
Mammut's legal obligation covers a warranty period of 2 years. We are voluntarily offering to replace all affected sets free of charge, provided the set is no more than 7 years old. This is the maximum service life for sets that are used only rarely (once or twice a year). Products that have exceeded this maximum service life will not be replaced and must be destroyed.

What connection is there between this current recall and the recalls issued by various manufacturers in fall 2012 due to decreased strength of elastic carabiner arms?
In both cases, a wear-related decrease in the strength of the carabiner arms was identified, something that was previously unknown in other mountain sports products such as slings and climbing harnesses. In fall 2012, the problem was initially isolated to elastic webbing, however Mammut's latest tests have shown that this decrease in strength can also be identified in static webbing.

Are other manufacturers also affected by this problem?
As soon as the test results became available, Mammut immediately informed alpine associations, testing institutes and other via ferrata manufacturers of this risk. Various manufacturers then identified a similar problem in their products and disclosed the test results. This is a product-specific effect. Any owner of a via ferrata set with a rope friction based shock absorber should contact the manufacturer of his or her via ferrata set to find out whether this set is affected.
How was the problem identified? Was there any accident or incident?
No, there was no accident or incident. The discrepancies were identified during routine tests on very worn sets from rental operations. However, since we wish to rule out any possible danger for end consumers, we decided to initiate this extensive recall.

How could this situation occur, with such an exceptionally large volume of via ferrata set recalls?
The via ferrata sets were developed by all manufacturers according to the state of technology at the time, the applicable safety standards and to the best of their knowledge and belief.
The new tests have shown that ageing and usage result in a far greater decrease in the strength of carabiner arms (elastic webbing or static webbing) in comparison with other mountain sports products, such as webbing slings or climbing harnesses. There was some knowledge of the fact that rope friction based shock absorbers may exhibit higher impact forces as a result of ageing and use, however not to the extent or frequency indicated in the latest tests. It has also been identified that certain values specified by the current EN standard for via ferrata sets do not offer sufficient strength margins to absorb this age- and usage-related decrease. The current products significantly exceed these standard requirements and once again provide sufficiently high strength margins. As a result of these findings, manufacturers, the UIAA, DAV and TÜV are currently working together to amend the standard to avoid such cases in the future.

Why has this problem only been identified now?
The technology used in via ferrata sets with rope friction based shock absorbers is more than twenty years old. Mammut and other manufacturers conduct regular tests on used products, including via ferrata sets. However, in recent years the boom in popularity of via ferrata has resulted in a great increase in the frequency at which via ferrata sets are used in rental operations and by private individuals. This situation has highlighted a problem that was previously hidden.

Why is the new replacement product safer?
Instead of a rope friction based shock absorber, the replacement product has a textile shock absorber. Extensive tests have shown that webbing shock absorbers are far less affected by ageing and usage in comparison with rope friction based shock absorbers. In addition, the carabiner arms on the new set have far higher strength margins. However, the following maximum service life specifications must be adhered to for new products as well.
How long can I use a via ferrata set and when do I need to replace it?
Via ferrata sets must be replaced immediately if any of the following criteria apply:
- after a fall
- if the seam pattern is damaged (doubts in relation to strength)
- in the event of heavy soiling (for example, by sand, grease, bitumen, oil, etc.)
- in the event of visible roughening of the webbing
- after contact with acids, for instance from a car battery
- after high thermal exposure (melting or signs of melting as a result of contact heat or frictional heat)

The following table provides guidelines for the service life of via ferrata sets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of use</th>
<th>Maximum service life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarely used: once or twice a year</td>
<td>up to 7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used occasionally: once a month</td>
<td>up to 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used regularly: several times a month</td>
<td>up to 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used frequently: every week</td>
<td>up to 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used constantly: almost daily</td>
<td>up to six months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>