
heightec Chrysalis and Pod stretchers - compatibility of supplementary devices

In the light of the recent wind turbine sector events, notably the determination of a Fatal Accident Inquiry (FAI) and HSE involvement, it is appropriate that heightec support this drive to further raise standards and capability. The technical guidance below is designed to support duty holders when selecting compatible supplementary devices employed within the Chrysalis and Pod stretchers.

Semi-rigid stretchers including the Chrysalis and Pod are designed to facilitate casualty extrication and transportation in environments where space limitations, restrictions and carry size are prime considerations. Supplementary devices are commonly employed to additionally stiffen, support or provide casualty immobilisation and protection.

Basket stretchers and spinal boards, commented on in the FAI determination, despite advantages, in some circumstances, would simply be impractical due to their size, shape or portability and consequently alternative designs are commonly chosen.

A first Aid Needs Assessment should determine what is most suitable and appropriate and will be influenced by anticipated needs of the casualty and the context of use.

Our policy statement is guided by specific “consensus statements” published by The Faculty of Pre-Hospital Care, which provides clear, unbiased, evidence based, clinical guidance, in conjunction with understanding of the real-world use.

- **Spinal, long or extrication boards**
 - require significant patient handling, increases risk to patients, e.g. log rolling
 - uncomfortable and linked to tissue pressure injuries
 - associated with negative outcomes only now advocated for extrication
- **Scoop stretchers**
 - split design, minimal patient handling, associated with positive outcomes
 - recommended for transport and immobilisation
 - stiffness provides protection and support laterally and longitudinally.
 - use of integral fall arrest capable harness enabled in vertical scenarios
 - comfortable due to ergonomic adjustable design
 - less tissue pressure injury due to increased surface contact area
 - when collapsed for transportation similar size to semirigid stretcher

Taking all these factors into account, heightec recommend the use of compatible models of scoop stretcher as the principal complement to both the Chrysalis and Pod stretchers. These may be supplemented with compatible head restraints and vacuum mats, as the circumstances dictate.

When compatible models of scoop stretchers are paired with Chrysalis or Pod stretchers, the combined design provides a wide range of safe and effective support, protection and immobilisation capabilities in line with the HSE comments and meet in full the requirements of the FAI determination statements which reference a “basket stretcher” or “spinal board”.