

Abseiling injury

August 2003

A climber was injured when an abseil rope detached itself

Issue

The rope was attached high in a large tree to a secure anchor via a large shackle. After some years of use, the rope caused the bolt in the shackle to screw in, the locking pin having rusted away. As a result the climber fell a long way.

Outcome

Maillons or karabiners may have been a better choice. Climbers will know what to look for when routinely inspecting these.

The investigating EHO decided that since this was not climbing equipment it should come under the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER). These require a design specification (for each item) and a bi-annual inspection by a competent person.