
**Kite boarding — Release system —
Safety requirements and test methods**

Kite — Système de sécurité — Exigences de sécurité et méthodes d'essai

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 83, *Sports and other recreational facilities and equipment*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

In the last two decades, the sport of kite boarding/kite surfing has transformed from a marginal sport to a popular sport performed by people of varying age groups and physiological condition levels. However, it cannot be neglected that kite boarding still is considered an "extreme sport" due to risks associated with speed, water and nature and unforeseeable situations related to these. If a situation arising cannot be controlled by the user, the release system will be the component which would most likely prevent emergencies, incidents, further injuries, or death.

This document has been developed in connection with the Global Kitesports Association (GKA) and other stakeholders, such as trainers/instructors, test houses, universities and other manufacturers. The aim of this document is to lower the risks associated with the sport for users and others.

When developing this document, requirements and test methods have been considered that resemble as closely as possible situations occurring and conditions present while performing the sport. One of the aspects was related to salt water. Tests conducted for validating the test methods have shown that using salt water or non-salted water has no effect on the test results. In order to keep the test method as simple as possible, it was seen more practical for the test to use non-salted water. In contrast to salt water, sand has shown to have prominent effect on the function of the components and consequently the test results.

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Kite boarding — Release system — Safety requirements and test methods

1 Scope

This document specifies the minimum safety requirement and test methods for a release system that reduces the pulling force of the kite and disconnects the user from the kite.

This document is applicable for release systems which are operated intentionally by the user or another person, and are used for the sport of kite boarding.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 679, *Cement — Test methods — Determination of strength*

EN 12275, *Mountaineering equipment — Connectors — Safety requirements and test methods*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

— IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

kite

wing which generates an aerodynamic force and propels the user

EXAMPLE A wing that uses wind.

3.2

kite boarding

sum of the disciplines that can be performed with a *kite* (3.1) attached to the user with any kind of board in any kind of environment

EXAMPLE Kite surfing, landboarding.

3.3

connection point

equipment on the harness or similar means affixed to the user where the *main release system* (3.4) is attached

3.4

connecting link

part which allows the rider to stay connected to the kite via the disconnecting release system after triggering the main release system

EXAMPLE A leash.

**3.5
release system**

set of elements dedicated to reduce the risk of the user and of third parties, providing the functions of the main release system and/or disconnecting release system

**3.5.1
main release system**

system that, when triggered via the trigger element, reduces or cancels the pulling force generated by the kite

**3.5.2
disconnecting release system**

system that, when triggered via the trigger element, disconnects the user from the kite completely

**3.6
control system**

sum of the components held in the user's hand that enable the kite to turn and the traction force to be altered

EXAMPLE A bar.

**3.7
act of triggering**

act of movement from first intended movement of any triggering element and releasing element until the system releases

**3.8
space of activation**

space required for the movement of all the involved triggering elements and releasing elements to function properly

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4 Safety requirements

ISO 21853:2020

4.1 General <https://standards.itih.ai/catalog/standards/iso/1a3b211d-4551-4448-971b-5e8b48bd8075/iso-21853-2020>

After each use, the release system shall not show signs of permanent deformation or of having been affected by the triggering in any way that could provoke malfunction.

Test in accordance with [5.6](#).

4.2 Strength

The main release system shall withstand a load of three times the maximum user weight as intended by the manufacturer or 3 600 N, whichever is greater, without any breakage and shall still function as intended by the manufacturer.

The disconnecting release system and the connecting link, if used, shall withstand a load of two times the maximum user weight as intended by the manufacturer or 2 400 N, whichever is greater, without any breakage and shall still function as intended by the manufacturer.

Test in accordance with [5.6.2](#).

4.3 Design

The design of the release system shall indicate how to trigger it. The direction of triggering shall be permanently identifiable.

Test in accordance with [5.8](#).

EXAMPLE An example for this is a 3D structure (such as an embossed or elevated arrow) on the surface, or a colour.

The part of the release system which is used for triggering, i.e. the triggering element, shall have a contrasting colour to the other parts of the release system, predominantly (>50 %) in red on its visible surface. The other parts of the release system shall not be in contrasting colours to each other.

The release system should be free from finger entrapments, squeeze and shear points.

Edges that could come into contact with the user's hands during use or handling and maintenance should not be sharp, e.g. deburred, broken, rolled or processed with comparable techniques.

Test in accordance with [5.7](#).

The space of activation shall not be restricted at any time by any part of the control system and by any part/component of the release system.

NOTE This also relates to soft parts/components of the release system which could, while being gripped and used for triggering, deform and/or tilt and consequently obstruct the actual movement of triggering.

While being triggered, no part/component of the release system should impact the user's hands.

4.4 Handling

4.4.1 General

It shall be possible to trigger the main release system by a first single action.

It shall be possible to trigger the disconnecting release system by a second single action.

The action for triggering shall be ergonomically and kinematically suitable for the physiological movements of the user.

<https://www.iso.org/standard/72411.html> It should be possible to trigger the main release system/disconnecting release system with garments, e.g. gloves.

4.4.2 Triggering force

The force to perform the act of triggering shall be ≥ 20 N and ≤ 170 N.

Test in accordance with [5.6.1](#) in relation to certain conditions (see [5.6.3.1](#), [5.6.3.2](#), [5.6.4](#), [5.6.5](#) and, if appropriate, [5.6.6](#)).

The release system shall not show signs of plastic deformation or of having been affected by the tests in any way that could provoke malfunction.

4.4.3 Release force

It shall be possible to trigger the main release system and/or disconnecting release system with one hand only, without any load simulating the pulling force of the kite.

Test in accordance with [5.5.2](#).

4.4.4 Duration of release

The main release system and/or disconnecting release system shall be triggered in ≤ 2 s.

Test in accordance with [5.6.1](#).

4.4.5 Reachability

It shall be possible to trigger the main release system and/or disconnecting release system with either of the user's hands as described in the user's manual. The connection points should not be on the back of the user.

4.5 Behaviour during release

All parts of the main release system and/or disconnecting release system designed to disengage as intended by the manufacturer, by the act of triggering, shall disengage (force generated by kite reduced or cancelled).

The disconnecting release system shall further disconnect the user from the kite.

Test in accordance with [5.6](#).

4.6 Additional requirements for cold and wet conditions

If the release system is designed to be used in cold and wet conditions, it shall be able to trigger the main release system and/or disconnecting release system in extremely cold and humid conditions, as defined in the test conditions.

NOTE Cold and wet conditions are related to snow kiting or other icy condition in which the user is likely to wear gloves or other garments.

Test in accordance with [5.6.6](#).

4.7 Information supplied by the manufacturer

4.7.1 User's manual

The manufacturer shall provide information for use in written form at the point of sale with at least the following:

- a) reference to this document, i.e. ISO 21853:2020;
- b) name and address of the manufacturer;
- c) a recommendation to become familiar with the correct use of the release system;
- d) warning to check the function of the release system before and after each use;
- e) maintenance and cleaning instructions, including detail on wear, tear and replacement;
- f) operating instructions outlining the main function(s) of the main release system for which it is designed and tested, each accompanied with illustrations:
 - 1) position of the connection points on the harness or similar means;
 - 2) how to attach the main release system and/or disconnecting release system onto the connection points of the harness or similar means to the user;
 - 3) how to trigger the main release system and/or disconnecting release system;
 - 4) how to reset the main release system and/or disconnecting release system;
- g) warning that safety procedures cannot be learnt during an emergency situation and thus the use of the release system requires training, e.g. by a recognized instructor or in a kite school;
- h) maximum user weight, recommended to also have minimum user weight;