



Kirby Morgan Dive Systems, Inc.®

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Safety Notice #1 of 1995 January 1995

Subject: Counterfeit Kirby Morgan KMB-18 Band Mask Diving Masks and SuperLite-17 Diving Helmets

Diving Systems International is the exclusive world wide manufacturer of Kirby Morgan diving masks and helmets.

It has come to our attention that counterfeit masks and helmets are being manufactured in mainland China. We have acquired samples of these copies of our products and have found the following:

1. A government owned factory in China has made copy molds of our equipment and is currently manufacturing copies of our Kirby Morgan KMB18 Band Mask and SuperLite-17 Helmet for use in China. Since the molds for the fiberglass parts are made directly from our shells, and the exterior components are attempted identical copies, the appearance of the counterfeit masks and helmets can be mistaken for our products.
2. Certain individuals and companies are taking advantage of the similar appearance by importing and selling these counterfeit masks and helmets as being "99% interchangeable" with the above mentioned Kirby Morgan products.

THIS IS NOT TRUE!

The Chinese copies of our masks and helmets are approximately **95% NON-INTERCHANGEABLE** with our masks and helmets.

The approximate 5% of parts that are interchangeable, if used underwater as replacement parts on DSI's masks and helmets, are life threatening and dangerous.

For the above individuals and companies to falsely state otherwise is a serious case of dishonesty to the customer, and/or, equally bad, they do not know what they are selling.

Several of the made-in-China threaded parts will screw loosely into the real Kirby Morgan components, although they have the wrong threads. When pressured up or during a dive, the fittings can blow apart. Worse yet, screwing the incorrect threaded part into a real Kirby Morgan component, or using a real Kirby Morgan spare part on the counterfeit mask or helmet will result in stripped threads that appear to tighten properly, but could fail in the normal course of diving.

Use of the counterfeit parts on Kirby Morgan masks and helmets should never be attempted.

Use of Kirby Morgan parts on the counterfeit helmets should never be attempted.

Any use of, or interchanging of these counterfeit parts will carry with it the very high risk of component failure and the high probability of death to the user.

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Genuine Parts

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3. Even without interchanging Genuine Kirby Morgan parts and the counterfeit parts, the copy masks and helmets made in China are dangerous to the life of the user and should not be used under any circumstances. There is a high probability of death to the user. The fiberglass and resin main frames of these copies are fabricated without proper fiberglass reinforcing. These parts are resin poured and automobile body repair putty filled. To add to the confusion, they call the made-in-China helmet "Super Right" a direct infringement on our trademark SuperLite. All fiberglass and resin parts, including the yoke on the counterfeit "Super Rite" will break apart when subjected to impacts.

One such incident has been reported to us. A Chinese copy yoke was sold to a company who believed they were buying a genuine Kirby Morgan replacement part. It was mounted on a SuperLite-17 The diver wearing that helmet encountered an explosion during a burning job. The Chinese copy yoke broke apart from the impact of the explosion and the diver barely survived by regaining consciousness rapidly and holding the helmet until he reached safety. Our genuine yoke is much stronger and would not break under those circumstances. The faulty yoke was determined to be a copy of our yoke that was made in China. The outside appearance was nearly identical to ours (since their mold was made on one of our yokes), but the interior was very different and vastly inferior in design, construction and strength. It was not reinforced properly (the same as the main frames) and so broke when it should not have.

The inserts that hold the lens retainer in place on the counterfeit masks and helmets are bonded to the main frame in an extremely weak manner. Automobile body repair putty was used to fill the area around the inserts. Many large voids (gas filled pockets) were found within the interior of the main frames. This can result in air or mixed gas equalizing the voids during a dive and exploding during the diver's ascent. The resulting explosion would be an accident that could be fatal without obvious explanation.

4. Diving Systems International personnel have tested the Chinese made units. In addition to the above dangers, we have found the parts and workmanship of assembly to be far below any standards for life support equipment. Certain parts that are essential to the underwater operation of the equipment are missing. Some components are assembled wrong. Other parts do not work correctly. They were copied wrong. As received, the made-in-China copies could not be used underwater due to flooding.

CONCLUSION:

The sales of these copy masks and helmets is resulting in confusion to the customers. The wrong parts are going to be used. This will result in accidents. All of these counterfeit masks and helmets are dangerous, and should be returned to the sellers for a full refund:

1. The sellers have misrepresented that there is "99% interchangeability" with Kirby Morgan equipment. An outright false statement.
2. The copy masks and helmets are dangerous to the life of the user.
3. In some cases the buyer purchased the equipment believing it was a Kirby Morgan product by such misleading names as "Super Right" or "Bandmask". Both are direct infringements on, and misuse of our Trademarks.





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4. The "blowpart" drawings and names of the parts are direct copies of our copyrighted drawings, including parts that are present on Kirby Morgan products, but not on the China copies. This illegal use of our material can result in the buyers of the counterfeit products believing that they are buying a real Kirby Morgan product.

Let the buyer beware!

Diving Systems International, Inc. will not be responsible in any way for the use (or misuse) of these counterfeit masks, helmets and spare parts. Return the masks, helmets and spare parts to the sellers and demand your money back!

We have worked hard over the last 30 years to design and manufacture functional, high quality equipment for the working diver. The individuals and companies that are selling these copies are infringing on our trademarks and copyrights. This has resulted in damage to our product's reputation and our business. The safety of our customers is being threatened. We intend to protect our customers as well as ourselves. We shall pursue all legal means to prevent these poor, life threatening copies of our high quality products from being sold.

We recommend that all companies, agencies, and individuals involved with commercial diving operations should prevent the purchase and use of these dangerous counterfeit masks and helmets.

Be absolutely sure that the replacement parts that are ordered for maintenance of Kirby Morgan masks and helmets are manufactured by Diving Systems International and are in fact Genuine Kirby Morgan Parts.

The life you save will be yours or your diver's.

END Safety Notice 1/95

Bev Morgan

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