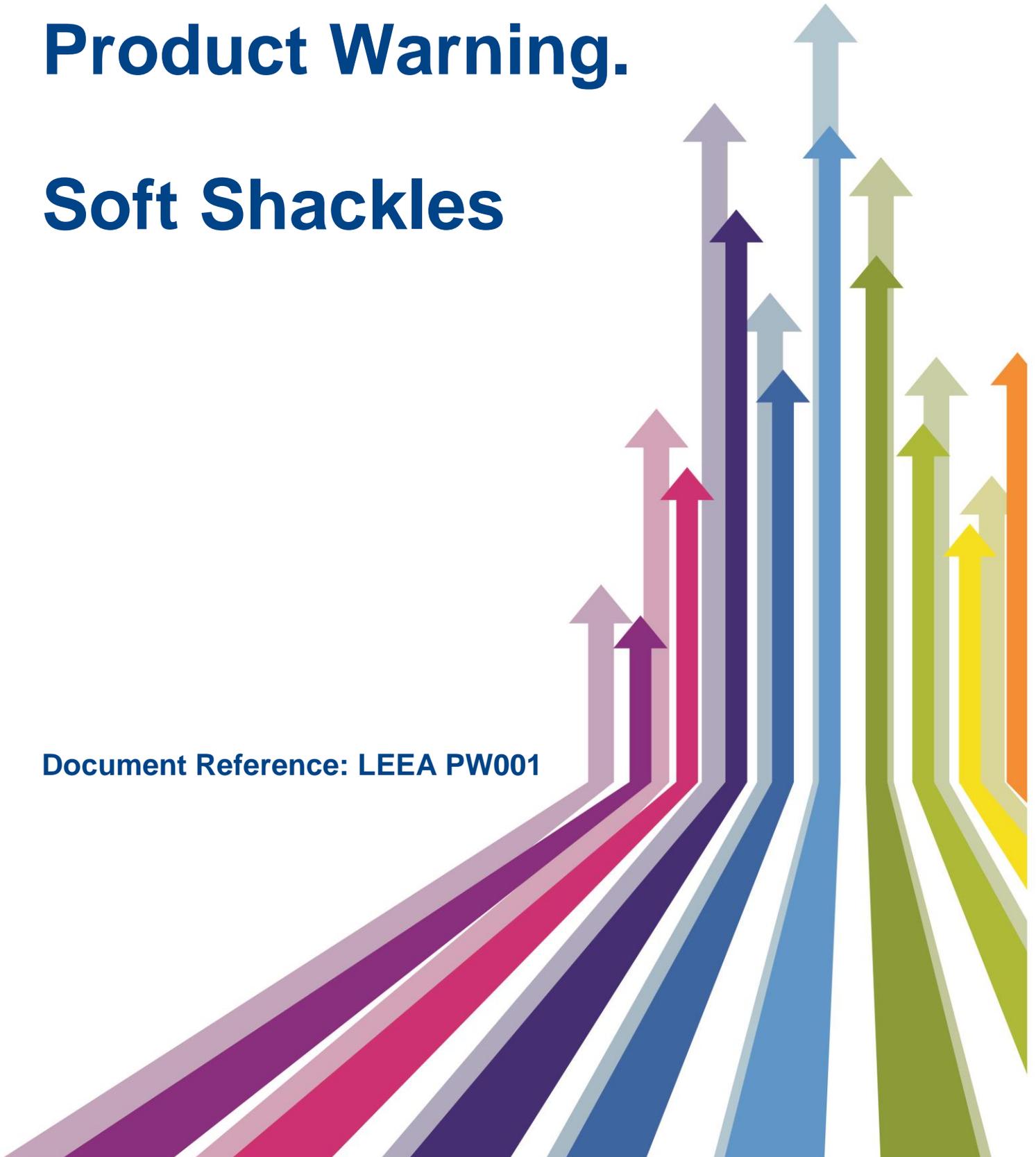


Product Warning.

Soft Shackles

Document Reference: LEEA PW001



Product Warning – Soft Shackles.

LEEA's Technical Committee have raised concerns regarding the safety of a new lifting accessory that is being supplied to the European Lifting Equipment Market. The device, shown in figure 1, is being referred to as a soft shackle.



Figure 1: HMPE Soft Shackles.

The shackle is made from a High Modulus Polyethylene (HMPE) material and is simply a short length of rope with an eye at one end and loop at the other. The rope is fixed to the load by simply wrapping it around the lifting point or component and securing by inserting the knot through the loop.

The speed in which this shackle can be rigged over that of a traditional shackle, makes the soft shackle seem a desirable option. However, duty holders should satisfy themselves that the item meets the essential health and safety requirements of the legislation. In this case the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008, which implement in the UK the Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC.

A current review of this product has highlighted that it, if intended by the manufacturer for lifting applications, does not comply with directive 2006/42/EC for the following reasons:

- The product is not CE marked or supplied with a EC Declaration of Conformity.
- The product is not marked in accordance with sections 1.7.3 and 4.3.2 of directive 2006/42/EC.
- The instructions for use do not contain all of the information required by section 1.7.4 of directive 2006/42/EC

LEEA does not have any evidence to suggest that the soft shackles are unsafe. However, based on the above non-conformities, it advises Duty Holders not to use them for lifting operations. Duty Holders are reminded that they have an obligation under PUWER regulation 10 to ensure that all work equipment coming into their undertaking meets all relevant Essential Health and Safety Requirements (EHSRs). In this case the Duty Holder fulfils this obligation by accepting the EC Declaration of Conformity, the instructions for use and correct product markings for the soft shackle.

LEEA is continuing to investigate these products and is currently liaising with Trading Standards and the HSE. LEEA will publish the results of this investigation once a conclusion has been reached.

Yours Sincerely, *B Dobbs*

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