

General Deployment Information

Deployment Speed

The maximum speed at which deployment has been demonstrated is 133 KIAS. Deployment at higher speeds could subject the parachute and aircraft to excessive loads that could result in structural failure. Once a decision has been made to deploy the CAPS, make all reasonable efforts to slow to the minimum possible airspeed. However, if time and altitude are critical, and/or ground impact is imminent, the CAPS should be activated regardless of airspeed.

Deployment Altitude

No minimum altitude for deployment has been set. This is because the actual altitude loss during a particular deployment depends upon the airplane's airspeed, altitude and attitude at deployment as well as other environmental factors. In all cases, however, the chances of a successful deployment increase with altitude. As a guideline, the demonstrated altitude loss from entry into a one-turn spin until under a stabilized parachute is 920 feet. Altitude loss from level flight deployments has been demonstrated at less than 400 feet. With these numbers in mind it might be useful to keep 2,000 feet AGL in mind as a cut-off decision altitude. Above 2,000 feet, there would normally be time to systematically assess and address the aircraft emergency. Below 2,000 feet, the decision to activate the CAPS has to come almost immediately in order to maximize the possibility of successful deployment. At any altitude, once the CAPS is determined to be the only alternative available for saving the aircraft occupants, deploy the system without delay.

Deployment Attitude

The CAPS has been tested in all flap configurations at speeds ranging from V_{SO} to V_A . Most CAPS testing was accomplished from a level attitude. Deployment from a spin was also tested. From these tests it was found that as long as the parachute was introduced to the free air by the rocket, it would successfully recover the aircraft into its level descent attitude under parachute. However, it can be assumed that to minimize the chances of parachute entanglement and reduce aircraft oscillations under the parachute, the CAPS should be activated from a wings-level, upright attitude if at all possible.