

Greetings all. In the last [CICA Safety Bulletin #335](#) we looked at the compliance of soft slings to Australian and International Standards.

**Today's Safety Bulletin looks at procurement, inspection and storage practices to ensure your slings are safe.**

#### For Procurement Teams:

- **List of warnings in English:** Ensure a list of warnings should be provided as a minimum on WLL tags in English.
- **Verification of Credentials:** Ensure that all synthetic sling suppliers have verifiable credentials and a consistent track record of compliance with Australian and international safety standards.

**Remember: NATA-accredited sling manufacturers can provide comprehensive technical support, inspection services, testing data, and quality assurance that non-accredited sling suppliers may lack.**

- **Supplier Audits:** Conduct or request comprehensive audits of supplier facilities and manufacturing processes to ascertain adherence to accepted quality assurance practices.
- **Clear Specifications:** Define clear and precise specifications for every sling purchased, including material, rated capacity, length, width, and environmental resistance.
- **Load Capacity:** Ensure the soft sling has an adequate working load limit (WLL) for the intended lift. The WLL should have a suitable safety factor based on the load weight and lift configuration.

#### For Operations and Safety Teams:

- **Inspection and Testing:** Implement a stringent incoming inspection plan that includes both physical and load testing of slings before they are placed into service. (A proof load certificate must be provided with the sling at the time of purchase.)

A robust inspection program to check for damage like cuts, abrasions, fraying, or colour changes before each use. Damaged slings must be removed from service immediately.

- **Training:** Provide ongoing training for all personnel involved in lifting operations on the correct handling, inspection, and maintenance of synthetic slings.

Ensure personnel are trained on correct slinging methods, avoiding twists, knots, and excessive angles between sling legs. Choke hitches and basket hitches reduce the WLL (refer to the diagram in [CICA Safety Bulletin #335](#)).

Determining if edge protection is required due to small radiuses should be part of a training program.

- **Documentation:** Maintain thorough records of sling inspections, tests, and usage to monitor integrity over the life of the sling and ensure traceability.
- **Load Characteristics:** Evaluate the shape, size, and surface condition of the load. Soft slings require protection from sharp edges and corners to prevent cutting or abrasion. Loads with edges sharper than the compressed sling thickness require additional protection like corner pads or sleeves.

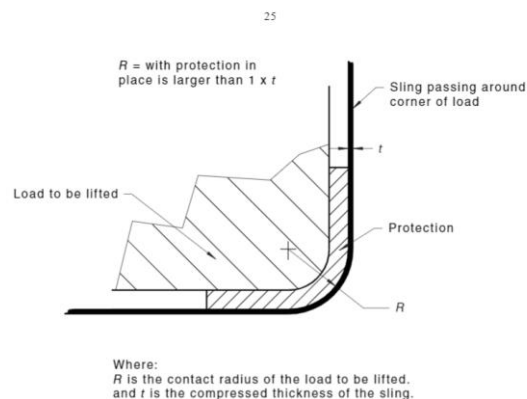


FIGURE 4.2 CORNERS LESS THAN 3 TIMES COMPRESSED THICKNESS

- **Environmental Conditions:** Consider the operating environment and select sling materials suitable for exposure to factors, like moisture, chemicals, UV radiation, or extreme temperatures.
- **Storage and Care:** Store soft slings in a cool, dry place away from sunlight, chemicals, and potential damage sources. Keep them clean and free from debris.
- **Compliance with Standards:** Select soft slings that comply with relevant Australian



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Standards like AS 4497:2018 for Flat Synthetic Round slings and AS 1353.2-1997 for Flat Synthetic Webbing slings. This ensures they meet safety and performance requirements.

- **Incident Reporting:** Establish a mandatory incident reporting system for any sling failures or near-misses and use this data to refine procurement and usage practices.

### **In conclusion**

The safety of lifting operations [depends crucially on the integrity and reliability of the equipment used](#).

While synthetic slings offer many benefits, their procurement must be managed with a keen focus on quality and compliance to prevent accidents and ensure the safety of all personnel involved.

For more information on soft slings refer to [CICA Safety Bulletin #283](#), [CICA Safety Bulletin #335](#) and the [Soft Sling Safety Resource Page](#). Also, look out for the launch of the NSW Rigging and Dogging handbook!

### **Relevant Australian Standards**

For more information, CICA members have free access to the relevant standards that relate to soft slings:

- AS 1353.2-1997 Flat Synthetic-webbing slings
- AS 4497:2018 Flat Synthetic-round slings

To become a CICA Member, click [here](#).

Remember: Safety is everyone's responsibility.

*Stay Safe - CICA*