

Counterweight Fly Systems Operation and Safety

1. BALANCE CHECK

Before moving any lineset, check that it is balanced. This operation can be done in one of two ways:

Visual Check

Locate the batten and its corresponding arbor and try to determine if the weight on the arbor is approximately equal to the weight on the batten. If the weights appear to be equivalent, proceed.

Rope Tension Check

If you cannot see the arbor or the batten, feel the amount of tension present in the rope on each side of the rope lock. If the amount of tension appears to be the same, proceed.

If you are not certain that the lineset is balanced, proceed with extra caution. If you anticipate trouble, prepare a 5 to 10 foot piece of 3/8 inch rope for use as a snub line. Tie one end of the rope to the locking rail and loosely tie a single half hitch around the operating line. If the lineset does begin to move of its own volition, you may be able to use the snub line to stop the movement.

2. WARN EVERYONE ON STAGE THAT SOMETHING WILL BE MOVING

Make sure that the area under the batten is clear and that all people on stage are aware that the lineset is being raised or lowered. Loudly call FLIES or LINE COMING IN (or GOING OUT) and identify what area of the stage will be affected. Be certain that everyone on stage hears and understands what is about to happen. The people on stage should answer with "Thank You" to let you know that they have heard and understood what is about to happen. Do not proceed if you don't hear the people on stage respond to your warning.

3. UNLOCK OPERATING LINES

When you are ready to move the lineset, remove the locking ring and then SLOWLY release the rope lock. If the line begins to move on its own, relock the rope lock immediately. If this does not stop the movement, you can use the snub line discussed above to help control the line set. Pull on the end of the rope to tighten the half hitch around the operating line. If this stops the motion, tie the rope around the operating line. If you can slow but not stop the motion, use your judgement as to whether you can safely bring the system to rest. If it is totally out of control, scream a warning to everyone on stage and run offstage quickly. In any case, do not proceed until you have corrected the out of balance condition.

4. MOVE THE LINESET

If the line is balanced, move it as required. The scenery moves in the same direction as the rope closest to you moves. If you pull down on the rope in front, the scenery moves down, pull up on the front rope, the scenery moves up. Watch the batten and its load while moving the line set.

5. RELOCK

When the scenery has been moved to its new location, lock the rope lock and replace the safety ring. Never leave a lineset unlocked or with the safety ring uninstalled.