

Pelican Cases

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Originted from: Val Schmidt (UNH) on January 28, 2011

Hello everyone,

I'm writing to inquire about your experience in the shipping and receiving of oceanographic equipment in Pelican cases. Here's the story that prompts the inquiry:

Recently we shipped a module from a 500 m rated AUV back to the manufacturer in Iceland. It was packaged tightly in a large, foam lined pelican case - in a way that seemed quite secure. However on arrival both the pelican case and the module inside we damaged. The handle on the pelican case was broken, one of the clasps was cracked, a large gouge in the plastic was evident on one corner, and all shock-watch stickers were blown. Amazingly, the cylindrical aluminum housing of the module inside had been pinched out of round by half a mm. I do not believe the unit weighted enough that a simple drop would have sustained this much damage.

So I started asking around and I heard of a group shipping an ROV in a pelican case that was encased in a wooden crate. When questioned about this they said that they'd found that their gear was less likely to be damaged if the pelican case was not visible. Evidentially shippers and handlers, knowing the reputation of Pelican cases (and perhaps their lifetime warranty), make a game out of testing the strength of them.

I'm curious to your experience. Do you find that pelican cases endure more beatings than others? Do you have other cases or methods you prefer?

-Val

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Reply from Dale Chayes on January 31, 2011

We've been using a mix of Haliburton, Pelican and Hardigg cases extensively for years (some for decades) and seen no serious damage: no broken latches, no missing handles, no significant

deformation (so far) with the following two exceptions:

One case of poor quality wheels on some new-style Pelican cases. Two out of two arrived from the vendor w/ broken wheels. The manufacturer quickly replaced them with no argument.

About 1991, the locks were hammered off a Haliburton suitcase (that was coming home more or less empty after delivering a scope to the Ewing in Easter Island.) That case was purchased in 1973 but Zero expediently replaced the locks for free.

With regard to hiding the good cases inside something else, we do that for the briefcase sized cases. Often put them inside an ActionPacker, not for fear of damage but because they look so inviting for someone to walk off with.

In the same period I have seen untold numbers of damaged plywood crates and ripped open cardboard boxes.

-Dale