

# ***Headquarters U.S. Air Force***

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*Integrity - Service - Excellence*

## **Personal Protective Equipment /Gear for Women**



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- **What are the processes/practices to evaluate the effectiveness of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for women in integrated career specialties (e.g., MOS)?**
  - Air Force leverages test & evaluation of Ground Combat PPE from the commodity lead service
    - Army lead service in most cases for ground combat PPE
  - Air Force manages Aircrew PPE via Safe to Fly evaluations
    - Ensures safety and suitability for Aeromedical equipment, Chemical-Biological protective flight equipment, Aircrew Flight Equipment and flying uniforms



- **What is the timeline and process to obtain equipment in supply channels or to request alternative equipment?**
  - The timeline varies by type of equipment and the ability of the industrial base to meet demand
    - Equipment is stocked at the base for immediate issue using historical demand patterns and tariff sizing to accommodate the majority of users
    - Alternative equipment, when requested, is validated by the user community and applicable program office and then fielded



- **How is equipment procured for unique fits if it is not in normal supply systems?**
  - Unique fit equipment is special ordered through the applicable equipment program office and then sourced
  - Uniform items are ordered directly through AAFES or DLA and usually arrive within 14 days.
  
- **Is the same equipment used in training as for real world missions?**
  - Every effort is made to use the same equipment in training that will be used in real world missions



- **Is all combat equipment issued for training? If not, why?**
  - Generally equipment required for combat is issued for use in combat training
  - Training scenario realism varies and level of realism impacts equipment used
    - Some equipment has short shelf life issues which require substitutes to be used in training
      - Ex: Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Equipment (CBRNE) equipment
        - During combat exercises CBRNE gear that has expired shelf life is marked as “training” and is re-used
        - Approach allows the Air Force to balance stocking CBRNE gear for real world use and meeting training needs



- **What methods are used to leverage new and changing technology to improve PPE for women?**
  - The Air Force centralizes requirements implementation for new and improved PPE in program offices
    - Program offices solicit feedback from user communities to make investment and fielding decisions
    - To meet the needs of women, the program office teams conduct field visits and solicits feedback from female equipment users



- **What methods are used to leverage new and changing technology to improve PPE for women?**
  - For ground combat equipment, the Air Force is fielding the Army's new gender neutral personal protective equipment
    - This equipment accommodates all body types
      - Limits complexity of stocking specific male and female equipment
      - Ensures that men and women of all sizes are able to perform their assigned tasks in combat