


ALWAYS ON TARGET

Spacesaver's Parachute Container ensures safety, security for parachute riggers and jumpers



I will keep constantly in mind that until men grow wings their parachutes must be dependable. ~ The Rigger's Creed, United States Army Quartermaster Corps

Imagine being responsible for up to 20,000 parachutes at any given moment—and, by extension, the lives of as many soldiers. As a Chief Rigger for an Army Quartermaster Company, the job of packing and repairing those chutes is a massive task. Riggers pack and store anywhere from 300—350 chutes a day, and how they are stored has

As the baskets would go through normal wear and tear, sharp edges and stray wire become a common occurrence.


a tremendous impact on the safety of the jumpers. One parachute that doesn't deploy fully or correctly could result in the loss of a soldier's life.

At the Army Quartermaster Company, chutes had been stored in heavy-gauge wire baskets. As the baskets would go

through normal wear and tear, sharp edges and stray wire become a common occurrence. Additionally, the wire mesh on the undercarriage of the baskets couldn't protect against wet days, when dirt, mud, and moisture would find a way to the chutes near the bottom. A makeshift piece of cardboard provided a less-than-ideal

solution. In addition, the new T-11 parachutes the company had been supplied were slightly larger than the T-10's they were used to storing, creating

another challenge in maximizing basket space.



Chutes being stored in heavy-gauge wire baskets. The wire was bending and breaking causing catch points where the chutes could potentially be damaged.

STORAGE BEFORE

Riggers at a State

National Guard were experiencing a similar strain. The base was in the process of repurposing a new storage facility, and their T-11 personnel chutes were currently being stored in cardboard boxes on a pallet rack. In order to transport the chutes, they needed to be unpacked and repacked to a suitable container. Excess chutes were also stored in

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metal lockers, which didn't allow the chutes to breathe properly.

Spacesaver's solution for these similar challenges doesn't begin in the United States, but an ocean away in Europe. The European Air Force base pre-dates the United States Air force and is considered to be the birthplace of Italian aviation. And, two years ago, they were facing the exact same storage issues.

"The European Air Force Base was getting the new T-11 civilian parachutes to replace the

T-10's, and didn't have the means to store them," says Jane Glass, Spacesaver's Director of Government Sales. "They were using a system comprised of wire baskets with wheels that fit on a pallet rack. The wire on the baskets was bending and breaking, causing catch points where the chutes could potentially be damaged."

Another problem was capacity, and after trying to find a commercial container that would fit the base's needs and coming up short, Glass turned to Spacesaver's engineers to create a custom solution—the Parachute Container. For prototype testing, Spacesaver turned to the Airborne Division of the Army Quartermaster company. "[This] is one of three largest parariggers in the United States. Getting them involved was closer than taking the prototypes overseas," Glass says.

Throughout the prototype process, the Spacesaver engineers paid close attention to





Smooth interior design,
so there are not any catch
points to damage the chute.

Welded bottom that has
forklift access from
all sides.

STORAGE AFTER

the
chief riggers
in the Army Quartermaster
Company. The first prototype was spot-on as
far as concept, but a thicker gauge metal and
a larger size was needed. The next iteration
addressed and solved the durability issue by
adding diamond perforated 12 ga. steel panels
for visibility and ventilation and an 11 ga.
steel frame for strength and rigidity. Protected
hinges and a reinforced plate on
the bottom were added to avoid
forklift damage to the container
when being pushed into place on a
cargo vehicle.

A third prototype revealed that adding a few
inches to the height of the container would
make it possible to send one container of
parachutes (64 chutes) on a plane carrying 54
jumpers—previously, a minimum of

two were
needed. This change paved
the way for creating two available container
sizes—the large container motivated by the
Quartermaster Company's needs, and a smaller
size, which stores up to 30 chutes.

**Protected hinges and a reinforced plate
on the bottom were added to avoid forklift
damage to the container when being pushed
into place on a cargo vehicle.**

After the prototype testing wrapped up, the
Army Quartermaster Company placed an order
for 339 large Universal Storage Containers. The
containers are made easy to use with lift points
on all sides and a structurally welded reinforced



**Universal Storage
Container stores up to 64
main chutes which correlates
with the 54 jump seats on a
C-130 air craft. One
full plane equals
one container.**

base for
forklift access,
and the access is
possible from all four
sides. And, as the Parachute
Container's are stackable—up to
3 high—The Quartermaster company is
planning to utilize the Parachute Container's

training missions. Soldiers tested the
Parachute Container's by transporting and
moving the containers just as they would
during an international deployment. Shortly
after the end of the training mission in the
local area, an order was placed for 40 small
Parachute Container's, which will be paired
with a Spacesaver Parachute Rack system

for hanging an additional
250 chutes.

**"A key driver for our company is to treat
our customers as the catalyst of their
own solution."**

Jane Glass, Director of Government Sales

in conjunction with Spacesaver's mobile
racking solution, ActivRAC® 16P, to maximize
floor space by eliminating all but one aisle
between racking.

For the State National Guard, the real test
for the Universal Storage Container was
deploying two of the prototypes for in-state

The product development
process for the Universal
Storage Container speaks to
a fundamental part of Spacesaver's product
development ethic. "We look for product
gaps that don't exist, and then we work with
our customers to refine those products,"
Glass says. "A key driver for our company is
to treat our customers as the catalyst of their
own solution."



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