

Air Force Para-Rigging Unit Expands Capacity with Purpose-Built Worktables, Carts, and Racks

CHALLENGE

Even with 3,500 square feet of space across two buildings, an Air Force para-rigging unit in the Southeast United States found itself running short on storage and safe workspace. The arrival of 250 new parachutes stretched capacity past what was considered safe or allowable.

The equipment used to prep chutes was also a concern. Four aging mobility tables, used to fold and pack hundreds of parachutes every month, showed cracks and splinters across the surface. Those flaws weren't just cosmetic. They posed a real risk of snagging parachute fabric, creating tears, and potentially compromising equipment reliability.

The unit needed a safer, more efficient way to handle both packing and storage without adding square footage.

SOLUTION

Working with Patterson Pope, the unit replaced the old tables with four new solid-surface worktables, each stretching 40 feet long. Reinforced and sealed for long-term durability, the new tops eliminated snag risks. Open areas beneath each table added capacity for storing up to 88 popped chutes per table.

The unit's Aircrew Flight Equipment Chief also contributed to the design of a new double-sided parachute cart, capable of carrying 20 packed chutes at a time. This innovation gave the crew a safe, efficient way to move parachutes from the rigging area to waiting trucks and helped reduce handling errors by keeping popped and packed chutes clearly separated.

The space was also outfitted with racks that allowed packers to work from a standing position. This small change had a big impact, improving ergonomics and helping maintain consistency during high-volume packing.



The result is a safer, faster, and more cohesive system for parachute operations.

ACHIEVEMENT

With the improvements in place, the unit can now fold and pack as many as 400 parachutes per quarter with greater speed and safety. The new worktables protect parachutes during preparation, while the carts ensure clean separation between ready and used gear. The racks add a level of ease and efficiency to the process, helping the crew maintain precision.

“The assistance we received – and the final result – has been phenomenal,” said the unit’s Aircrew Flight Equipment Chief.

The result is a safer, faster, and more cohesive system for parachute operations. Instead of fighting against outdated equipment and crowded storage, the rigging team now works in a space designed to support the mission.



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