

## The North Carolina National Guard uses Spacesaver Freestyle Lockers to Prevent Property Loss

*The North Carolina National Guard anticipates significantly reducing losses, due to the implementation of these locker rooms.*



Protecting government property and equipment used by hundreds of soldiers can be a challenge, especially when there is no central location to store those items. Such was the case in the state of North Carolina. Soldiers in the North Carolina National Guard were required to store their gear and equipment in their homes. This was not an ideal solution, and often times resulted in the loss of government property.

Sometimes, to determine whether or not a soldier would be liable for any lost or misplaced equipment, a Financial Liability Investigation of Property Loss (FLIPL) is conducted. A FLIPL is used in situations where responsibility for the loss is in question, or where the amount to be charged is in dispute.

There may be a large number of people involved in a FLIPL. The investigation might include the initiator, the respondent, the responsible officer, the property book officer, the appointing authority, the approving authority, the investigating officer, the legal reviewing officer, the respondent's attorney, the unit personnel administrator, and a finance officer. FLIPLs can take up valuable time, but at the end of the day, the equipment still needs to be replaced.

"We would rather just have the gear back," said MSG Joseph Olive with the North Carolina National Guard, "The FLIPL can be a time-consuming process."

**To avoid FLIPLs, there needed to be a system in place to ensure accountability and security of equipment.** A study concluded that over 90% of Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment (OCIE) losses occurred in the ranks of E1 through E5. For the North Carolina National Guard, the solution to this problem was to create a locker room in each National Guard readiness center throughout the state to keep valuable equipment (for E5 and below), secure and accounted for. Space needed to be borrowed from other areas of readiness centers to make room for the new lockers. Classrooms have been converted to locker rooms and even old twenty-foot-long shipping containers have been equipped with lockers. The North Carolina National Guard can fit 18 lockers inside each shipping container and make use of the space when there is no room onsite for a locker room.



Each locker was constructed with a perforated mesh door designed to obscure the view of expensive equipment kept inside for added security.

The first step in creating these new locker rooms began with the North Carolina National Guard submitting an e-buy request, an online Request for Quotations (RFQ), for gear lockers. This request came through to Dick Willard at Patterson Pope, the local Authorized Spacesaver Representative in the state of North Carolina. Dick had worked with the National Guard on a variety of other projects such as their Central Issue Facility (CIF) and records storage areas, and he was familiar with their particular needs and requirements. He reached out immediately to provide a solution.

The planning team for the North Carolina National Guard had previously seen sample units from a variety of other vendors that included standard metal locker products and wire cages, which didn't offer the versatility they were looking for. In order to provide the unique locker size requirements that the North Carolina National Guard needed, Dick worked with Spacesaver to engineer a custom locker that was built to accommodate the larger mobility bags and other equipment. Spacesaver then manufactured a sample locker within two weeks of the request and sent it to the customer for testing.



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— MSG Joseph Olive

These new locker rooms have the potential to save the North Carolina National Guard millions of dollars.

**Each locker was constructed with a perforated mesh door designed to provide airflow and to obscure the view of expensive equipment kept inside for added security.** Another important feature was the flexibility as well as the large amount of interior space made available for each locker.

Freestyle lockers have now been installed in a variety of locations throughout the state.

"Patterson Pope has been really great to work with," said MSG Olive. "We brought a soldier on board to manage the installation, and he states that Dick Willard and Patterson Pope have performed to the standard of the statement of work."

According to Olive, the North Carolina National Guard expects to see significant savings with the installation of the wall lockers.

"Stuff just gets lost in the shuffle sometimes," said MSG Olive, "This is going to make a big difference for us."