



Midlands Air Ambulance Charity

(In partnership with West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust)

Standard Operating Procedure

'PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT'

DATE APPROVED:	January 2016
APPROVED BY:	Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager
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LEAD DIRECTOR:	Director of Specialist Operations/Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer
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Change Control:

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Impact assessment	
Author	R Steele (Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager)

Change History:

Date	Change	Authorised by
08.06.09	Initial DRAFT completed by HEMS Team Leader	Operations Manager
08.06.09	Format review to comply with standardised governance format by Governance, Safety and Risk Manager	
16.06.09	Agreed with amendments at Clinical Governance and Operational Focus Group	
22.09.09	Approved by Operations Manager (IC)	
22.09.09	Final review by Governance, Safety and Risk Manager (DD)	
14.12.09	Final approval by Air Operations Manager (RT)	
11.01.11	Review by Air Operations Manager 3.3 removed section relating to rip stop groin and knee protections 3.8 added flight suits should be laundered at the end of each operational shift 8.3 removed The fabric complies to EN 531, EN 533 for protection from flame and have no wash restrictions. 8.2 added all issued undergarments will be a fire retardant materiel such as cotton.	R Tinsley
11.01.01	Sent to GSR , MAA Operational and Clinical Focus Group for Review	
April 11	Final Review	Air Operations Manager
April 11	Approved and distributed	Air Operations Manager

July 2012	Reviewed by Clinical/Operations Committee – J Spiers	
August 2012	Reviewed, approved and distributed	Air Operations Manager
December 2014	Reviewed. Latest version of MAAC logo inserted, WMAS updated to reflect Foundation Trust Status, MAA updated to MAA Charity where appropriate.	J Hancox
December 2014	Reviewed, approved and distributed	R Tinsley
November 2015	Reviewed	J Hancox
January 2016	Final review, approval and distribution	R Steele

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 as amended *S/2002*, requires that equipment must be supplied and used at work wherever risks to health and safety cannot be adequately controlled by other means. Such equipment, including safety helmets and boots should be worn at appropriate times as per guidance provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- 1.2 Midlands Air Ambulance Charity, along with WMAS, is committed to providing adequate and appropriate uniform to all staff required to wear it. The uniform should be of a suitable type so that it conforms to current legislation and regulations pertaining to Air Ambulance services.
- 1.3 The SOP will embrace other corporate image issues such as non-wearing of jewellery and the use of personal equipment and will compliment existing WMAS NHS Foundation Trust policies and procedures, in line with current Health and Safety Legislation and infection Prevention and Control Guidance.
- 1.4 All PPE should only be used for the purpose intended. It must be maintained in good condition and checked regularly.

2.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 2.1 A 'suitable and sufficient' risk assessment should be undertaken regarding PPE.
- 2.2 The risk assessment will include:
 - 2.2.1 Identification of risks.
 - 2.2.2 Establishing any groups that may particularly be at risk.
 - 2.2.3 Establishing current controls in place, to reduce risk.
 - 2.2.4 The level of risk, based on the current controls in place.
 - 2.2.5 Further action required
- 2.3 The Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager is responsible for ensuring that the risk assessment is undertaken.

3.0 AIRCREW FLIGHT SUITS

- 3.1 All Aircrew will be provided with a flame retardant flight suit.
- 3.2 Whilst operational with Midlands Air Ambulance, the provided flight suit must be worn.

- 3.3 All new flight suits will be a compliant with relevant regulations and will withstand an agreed number of washes as per manufacturers' guidelines and recommendations. When the suits are nearing the maximum amount of washes it should be highlighted to the base lead that will inform the Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager who will order a replacement.
- 3.4 Midlands Air Ambulance is a uniformed service and the flight suits are the operational uniform provided whilst engaged in flight operations. When a new flight suit is provided to a member of staff, the latest suit provided should be worn in preference to any older style suits.
- 3.5 Should any repairs become required then the Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager should be informed as soon as possible so arrangements for repair can be made.
- 3.6 No alterations shall be done to the provided suits e.g. additional badges, without the permission of the Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager.
- 3.7 The suits are not to be used for any other purpose other than when operational with, or attending a sanctioned event on behalf of, Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.
- 3.8 Flight suits must not be worn to and from work.
- 3.9 Flight suits should be laundered as required and in conjunction with relevant Infection, Prevention and Control Guidelines.

4.0 BOOTS

- 4.1 All Aircrew will be provided with a pair of black boots with 200J toecaps that conform to the standards required for Air Operations.
- 4.2 Footwear worn will only be that which has been provided by Midlands Air Ambulance Charity/West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust. This footwear must be worn at all times whilst operational.
- 4.3 Boots should be kept clean and well polished.
- 4.4 When boots become excessively worn then the Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager must be informed and a replacement pair will be provided as soon as possible.

5.0 ALPHA FLIGHT HELMETS

- 5.1 All Aircrew will be issued with an ALPHA Aircrew Helmet.
- 5.2 The helmet will protect the head on impact only if properly fitted.
- 5.3 A servicing contract is held with the suppliers for refurbishment and/or repairs when required.
- 5.4 Aircrew are not permitted to conduct any alterations to the helmets at any time.
- 5.5 Aircrew should take care at all times to ensure the helmets are kept clean and used responsibly.
- 5.6 If refurbishment and/or repairs are required then the helmet must be thoroughly cleaned and then sent to the Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager detailing the nature of the work required.
- 5.7 All helmets should be stored on the bases. The only exception being if a member of aircrew is to undertake duties at another base in the very near future.

6.0 3M E.A.R. BANDED EARPLUGS

- 6.1 When working around aircraft on a regular basis, the cumulative effects on a persons hearing can be severe. Therefore all aircrew are issued with 3M E.A.R. banded earplugs. These do not provide the same level of protection as an aircrew helmet therefore aircrew should endeavour to wear a correctly fitted helmet when moving around in the vicinity of an operational aircraft.
- 6.2 All Aircrew must carry on their person a pair of the issued earplugs for use at times when the aircrew helmet is not available.
- 6.3 Aircrew should also wear the earplugs when operating in the vicinity of operational fuel bowsers.

7.0 SAFETY GLASSES

- 7.1 All Aircrew are issued with a pair of 3M safety glasses. These are provided to protect the eye from splashes of bodily fluids and/or fuel.
- 7.2 Safety glasses must be worn when dealing with patients who pose a risk of cross contamination from bodily fluids. Due to the aerosol effect this should include all patients with chest injuries and/or airway problems.
- 7.3 In the absence of a correctly fitted ALPHA helmet, with the visor down, Aircrew must wear the glasses during aircraft refuels (both hot and cold).

- 7.4 If a pair of glasses becomes broken, scratched, or heavily soiled by body fluids they should be disposed of in the normal clinical waste bins.
- 7.5 Safety glasses for spectacle wearers are available on request from the Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager.

8.0 FIRE RETARDANT UNDERGARMENTS

- 8.1 All Aircrew will be issued with fire retardant undergarments (t-shirts) for use under flight suits.
- 8.2 Only undergarments supplied by Midlands Air Ambulance Charity may be worn to ensure they are made of a suitable, fire retardant material such as cotton.

9.0 REFLECTIVE JACKETS

- 9.1 All Aircrew will be issued with a high visibility, waterproof, fire resistant and anti static coat.
- 9.2 High visibility jackets must be worn and secured at the front in accordance with WMAS policy.
- 9.3 High visibility jackets will be worn at all RTCs. Scene Managers have the right to refuse entry to the scene to those persons not wearing appropriate PPE.

10 SAFETY HELMETS

- 10.1 All Aircrew are issued with a safety helmet
- 10.2 Safety helmets must be worn at all times where there is risk of injury to staff.

11 GENERAL INFORMATION

- 11.1 All PPE issued to Aircrew remains the property of Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.
- 11.2 On completion of secondment to Air Operations, all issued PPE must be returned to the Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager in a clean and serviceable condition.

12 RELATED DOCUMENTATION

- 12.1 The following documentation is related to this SOP:

Issue Date	January 2016	Issued By	Air Operations/MERIT/RTD Manager	Document No	OPS-SOP-019
Revision	Version 5	Authority	Director of Specialist Operations/ACAO	Page	8 of 9

12.1.1 West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust Uniform and Dress Code Policy

12.1.2 Personal, Protective Equipment (PPE, (EC Directive) regulations 1992 as amended by *SI 2002*