



US Special Operations adopts new modular mask with integrated goggles

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The [United States Special Operations Forces \(SOCOM\)](#) will adopt a new modular system for respiratory and eye protection, following a contract signed on October 9 between the Pentagon and manufacturer [Avon Protection](#).

The new system, known as **MITR**, combines a half-mask respirator and protective goggles to provide a flexible barrier against hazardous chemicals, toxic dust and other airborne contaminants, including lead residue from firearms discharge, ballistic impacts and toxic substances such as fentanyl.

Flexibility and modularity for elite units

Designed as an alternative to bulkier full-face masks, the MITR system covers the eyes, nose and mouth while allowing operators to tailor the level of protection to mission requirements and tempo.

"A modular system offers several options," Casey Galligan, Avon's Senior Director for U.S. Defense and Homeland Security and a former U.S. Army Green Beret, told Defense News.

"Drug precursor chemicals and clandestine laboratories now pose an enormous threat, as dangerous as a traditional chemical or biological hazard. MITR was not designed to replace a full-face respirator, but to provide a lightweight and versatile alternative."

The system fills the gap between disposable N-95 masks and heavy full-face respirators. The goggles and half-mask can be worn together or separately, attached via a head harness or directly to the tactical helmet, with a total weight of approximately **225 grams** (half a pound).



Technical features of the MITR system

- **Positive-pressure seal:** The goggles fully seal the eye area to prevent the entry of chemical agents or toxic substances.
- **Anti-fog system:** A flow of fresh air continuously blows inside the lenses from both sides to ensure optimal visibility even during physical exertion.
- **Sweat drainage:** Internal channels direct moisture and sweat outward.

- **Mounting versatility:** Compatible with both an elastic head harness and quick-release attachments for tactical helmets.

Operator context and safety: the SOF Cancer Study

The Department of Defense's adoption of this new device follows the findings of the **SOF Cancer Study**, published in November 2025. The report found that special forces operators face an **18% higher risk of developing cancer** than other military personnel because of **constant exposure to hazardous materials, toxic fumes, and dust during operations and training.**

Field deployment and future prospects

The MITR system, already purchased by Canada and another country in the Five Eyes (FVEY) alliance, is already being operationally issued to several elite U.S. units.

"We have already issued the system to several units, and additional batches are being delivered," Galligan revealed. "The feedback we are receiving from operators in the field is outstanding."

The introduction of the half-mask by special forces could mark a paradigm shift across the military facial protection sector:

"When you see the spearhead of the armed forces adopt a solution like this, it quickly becomes an accepted and widely adopted standard," Galligan concluded.