



Tom Eggers
Director
Utilis USA, LLC

Thomas Eggers is the director and managing member of Utilis USA, LLC. His 10 years of experience includes two assignments as an acquisition officer in the Air Force. He then moved to General Dynamics as a test engineer on the Joint Biological Point Detection System. Following this, he was given an opportunity to join DRS Technologies as a business development director for various chemical and biological defense and combat support equipment programs. As director of Utilis USA, he brings this combination of military and industry knowledge to take this emerging company to the next level of success.

Q: For starters, can you tell me a little about the company?

A: Utilis USA, LLC is located in Fort Walton Beach, Fla., and, along with our partner, Celina Tent Inc., manufactures the complete line of Utilis USA products. This product line includes rapidly deployable tactical soft-wall shelters that incorporate a patented state-of-the-art folding-frame design. This design is licensed from the European-based Utilis S.A.S. and has been field-proven over the last seven years. The Utilis design was introduced to the U.S. Army

in 2005 and is gaining recognition due to its incredibly simple but durable design and lightweight features.

Q: Obviously shelters are your core business. What are some examples of your shelter systems?

A: Utilis USA shelters range in size from 200 to 646 square feet. Our shelters can be used for a variety of applications and in the most extreme conditions. We offer command and control, medical, billeting, decontamination, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear collective protection solutions.

As an example, the Utilis USA TM54 shelter—581 square feet—can be erected by four people in just three minutes. The tent utilizes a novel pulley-type mechanism to deploy the shelter skin and integral protective liner in one move, which means that no additional time is required to collectively protect the shelter. For general-purpose deployment configurations, the same design concept is used to deploy a lightweight fabric liner integral to the tent skin. This is a huge time-saving function for the warfighter.

Q. What makes your shelters different from those already on the market?

A: What makes our shelters different is the quick-erect technology. Plus, it provides the strength and durability required for long-term military deployments. Our shelters are perfect for a wide-range of military support missions. We know everyone has more important jobs to do than putting up tents, and the Utilis shelter allows them to get this job completed quickly without the concern of their tent failing them in the field.

Q. Have there been any recent significant events with your product line?

A: Yes, several in fact. Aberdeen Test Center [ATC] conducted blackout testing on the Utilis USA shelter system. The shelter system successfully passed the 100-meter naked eye, 300-meter night vision goggle and ingress/egress blackout evaluations. Blackout testing was conducted on the TM54 shelter with no internal liner. This blackout test completes the series of

technical tests, including wind, rain, 50 erect/strike cycles and snow loads. Since Utilis USA passed every test at ATC on its first attempt without any additional kits, we feel our shelter is superior to what is currently available.

In addition, U.S. Army Force Provider and U.S. Air Force BEAR Base completed an extensive evaluation of the Utilis shelter and gave it very high marks. Due to its reduced weight, packing volume and rapid deployment, the Utilis USA collective protection system is a part of the joint expeditionary collective protection technology demonstrations. The soldiers' positive comments, plus the strength and speed of the design, equals a bright future for Utilis USA.

Q: How are you positioned for the future with the military?

A: Because of the ever-changing environment we live in along with the worldwide terror threat, the tactical shelter market is undoubtedly growing. We offer a proven and reliable product that greatly enhances any mission in many ways. With our rapid set-up/strike, versatile packaging and complexing options, the Utilis shelter can accommodate any critical situation quickly and allow the operations personnel to focus solely on the task at hand.

With that said, I see Utilis USA as being in the back of the soldier's and airmen's minds. The last thing our warfighters need is to be concerned with where they are going to sleep, work, shower or eat. That should be a constant. Utilis is that constant. □

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