

To Whom it may concern:

I'm writing in regards to the Cobra Cuffs, the flex-cuffs made by mil-spec plastics. I am currently serving as A Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps with the 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion as a Reconnaissance Scout Squad Leader. My MOS is 0311, Rifleman. I have pulled two deployments with LAR, both to Helmand Province, Afghanistan. My first tour was in 2009, the second in 2011. Between my tours, from late 2009 to early 2011 I was with 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion, training to become a Critical Skills Operator. I am currently in charge of 2nd LAR's 26th MEU detachment of Reconnaissance scouts, A squad reinforced to 24 infantrymen. We've just finished the Special Operations Training Group's MEUSOC (Marine Expeditionary Unit Special Operations Capable) pre-deployment training package, which focuses on two specific mission sets; Amphibious Raids and TRAP operations or Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel. I believe two pre-deployment work ups at Mojave Viper California, two combat deployments to Afghanistan, one SOTG/MEUSOC pre-deployment workup and my training with 3rd MSOB qualifies me to speak with authority on the subject of flex-cuffs and their PERFORMANCE IN THE FIELD.

On my first deployment my squad and I used the original military issue flex-cuffs for all detainee operations. There are two customary ways that Marines carry these flex-cuffs, one is with the cuff not yet threaded and one is with the cuff loosely threaded. With no thread Marines will usually run the very long cuff through there Molle on their plate carriers. With the loosely threaded technique Marines will normally clip the cuff to a D-Ring on either there utility belt or the lower portion of the plate carrier. We found that the military issue flex-cuffs when pre-threaded were too bulky for urban environment based missions, as they would BECOME snagged up on furniture, door knobs, and even window sills. They were also found to be too bulky for vehicle mounted patrols, as the squad dismounting from vehicles with the military-issue flex cuffs would get caught on the doors, radios, seatbelts, etc. When carrying the military issued-flex cuffs unthreaded, Marines had trouble with the end of the cuff sticking out either the top of the plate carrier or the bottom. This presents a problem during nighttime operations when stealth is crucial, as the protruding cuff would snag on brush and trees audibly compromising the patrol. Another disadvantage to this manner of carrying is that the un-threaded cuff has to be run through the Molle on the back of the plate carrier resulting in Marines having to wait on a buddy to pull it out and then thread it, which takes an unreasonable amount of precious time. In my experience military issued flex-cuffs also have a short shelf life when exposed to the harsh conditions of the deserts in Afghanistan.

Prior to my second deployment, in 2011, a colleague acquired fifty of the flex-cuffs produced by Milspec Plastics, called Cobra Cuffs. I was immediately impressed with the Cobra Cuff because of the compact design. Where the military issued cuffs are bulky and awkward to carry, the Cobra Cuffs are compact in there folded design, making them convenient to carry on one's kit. Throughout my second deployment I continually experienced the advantages to using Cobra Cuffs as opposed to the military issued cuffs. Cobra Cuffs can also be inserted directly into the Molle webbing of a plate carrier but, since they are approximately a quarter of the length of military issued cuffs, one can easily fit them in the front amongst magazine and grenade pouches, which alleviates the need for a second Marine to pull them out. The Cobra Cuffs are automatically pre-threaded and extremely compact. they can pull it out himself and quickly administer them on an individual in a timely manner, allowing the operator to get back to the mission at hand much quicker than with the military issue cuff. Another strong advantage of the Cobra Cuff is it's durability. The material of the Cobra Cuff is far less brittle than the military issued cuff, I didn't experience any degradation of the teeth on the mechanism over time. There were no creases or permanent folds that render the teeth on the military issue cuffs useless.

Overall, my teams experience has proven the Cobra Cuff 'S DESIGN, DURABILITY and PERFORMANCE to be far superior to the military issued cuff. I was so impressed with the performance of the Cobra Cuff that I am willing to purchase them with my own money for my upcoming deployment since the military has not made them available for order through our national ordering system. I can say this with absolute certainty; When Marines step outside the wire in theater they cannot afford to use anything but the most functional and dependable gear, and Cobra Cuffs are exactly that.

Sincerely

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