

# RPE FOR THE CHANGING THREAT

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Traditionally, specifications for military respiratory protective equipment (RPE) have been based on certain military scenarios. Typically the requirements are based around large scale CBRN attacks for prolonged periods and covering a wide area. Requirements are therefore dominated by general service activities with the need for the wearer to operate in a contaminated area for periods of up to 48 hours whilst maintaining high levels of protection. The resulting general service respirators are therefore typically limited to traditional negative pressure mask and filter combinations worn with protective clothing utilising absorbent carbon cloth technology. The CBRN threat is changing. Recent concerns and requirements for CBRN protection have evolved away from the stereotypical military scenario. Incidents envisaged are often in an urban situation and terrorist threats are typically in a civilian environment. The demands of such scenarios differ significantly from the large scale CBRN incident. The requirements for protection are not limited to military personnel. There are an increasing number of first responders, such as law enforcement officers, doctors and ambulance crews, who might have to operate effectively in a CBRN environment. This presentation will describe how Avon has considered the differing needs of specific user groups carefully. This process has led to the M53 mask, which can be combined with supplied air systems, and the EH20 CBRN escape hood. These provide alternatives to the traditional CBRN general service respirator. In particular the ability to adapt to a situation as the threat changes has been taken into account.