



**Homeland
Security**

Science and Technology

Highlight

U.S. Department of Homeland Security



System Assessment and Validation for Emergency Responders

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) established the System Assessment and Validation for Emergency Responders (SAVER) Program to assist emergency responders making procurement decisions.

Located within the Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) of DHS, the SAVER Program conducts objective assessments and validations on commercial equipment and systems, and provides those results along with other relevant equipment information to the emergency response community in an operationally useful form. SAVER provides information on equipment that falls within the categories listed in the DHS Authorized Equipment List (AEL). The SAVER Program mission includes:

- Conducting impartial, practitioner-relevant, operationally oriented assessments and validations of emergency responder equipment;
- Providing information that enables decision makers and responders to better select, procure, use, and maintain emergency responder equipment.

Information provided by the SAVER Program will be shared nationally with the responder community, providing a life- and cost-saving asset to DHS, as well as to federal, state, and local responders.

The SAVER Program is supported by a network of technical agents who perform assessment and validation activities. Further, SAVER focuses primarily on two main questions for the emergency responder community: "What equipment is available?" and "How does it perform?"

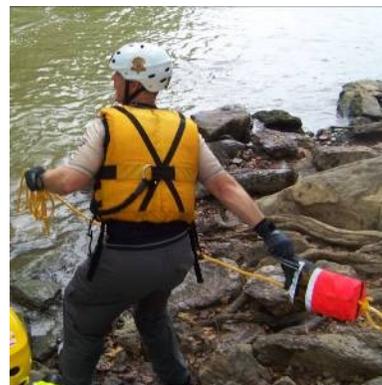
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Throw Bags for Water Rescue

Throw bags are important rescue devices used by emergency responders to reach victims during water rescue and other unexpected situations. A throw bag is a flotation device that contains a length of rope loosely stuffed into it that deploys through the top as the bag is thrown to a victim. Throw bags are sometimes used as messenger lines (or throw lines) to deploy larger bags and as anchors to secure boats and other vessels to docks. Response scenarios that require the use of throw bags include swift water rescue, still water rescue, ice rescue, and utility and/or logistical operations.

As a SAVER Program technical agent, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) has conducted a comparative assessment of throw bags. Prior to the assessment, SAIC conducted a market survey in order to provide information on commercially available equipment, and produced the *Market Survey Report on Throw Bags*. A focus group was then conducted to identify equipment selection criteria for the assessment, determine evaluation criteria, and recommend assessment scenarios. The results can be found in the *Focus Group Recommendations on Throw Bags* report.

These reports, as well as the *Assessment Report on Throw Bags*, will be located on the SAVER Web site (<https://www.rkb.us/SAVER>) as they become available. Reports on other technologies being assessed in the SAVER Program can also be found on the Web site.



Deployment of a Water Rescue Throw Bag