



Tinoco

## Ready to Go at a Moment's Notice

Whether for re-stationing, deployment, bugout, a three-day patrol, or simply for moving from point A to point B, military personnel need to have their gear at the ready at all times, and they require luggage and equipment that is up to “mil spec” or the task at hand. With this in mind, the Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) carries a wide assortment of the latest backpacks, duffel bags and other luggage items to address all these needs.

Marissa Tinoco, the Exchange buyer who is responsible for these items, reported that category sales rose during fiscal 2016, with backpacks, duffels and other luggage items — including civilian luggage products — generating \$39.6 million in sales, a 5.5-percent increase from the \$37.54 million in sales generated during the prior year.

### POPULAR PRODUCTS

“Military tactical-styled backpacks are doing very well,” Tinoco noted. “Oversized duffels continue to remain strong, especially during PCS season and holiday selling periods. MultiCam and coyote brown colors are doing very well in military bags.”

In civilian luggage, she said that hard-side luggage continues to grow, outpacing soft-side sales, a trend that, she noted, is not confined to AAFES stores and “can be seen in the luggage industry.”

Due to some airlines’ carry-on travel restrictions and fees, Tinoco said that “under-seater”-style bags “are gaining in popularity,” as they are small enough to bring on a flight and place out of the way under seats but large enough to have plenty of room for essential items.

### PROMOTIONS, NEW PRODUCTS

Tinoco told *E and C News* that new 2017-2018 planogram collections will update in the fall, “to keep the assortments fresh and up-to-date with stores outside the gate. We have a number of one-time buy (OTB) holiday

### AAFES Fiscal 2016 Top-10 Best-Selling Luggage Items

Military Bags	Sales
1) Sandpiper of California Bugout Bag (black) . . . . .	\$2,001,458
2) Mercury Mini Monster Bag (black) . . . . .	\$1,917,791
3) Flying Circle Reception Value Pack . . . . .	\$1,911,775
4) Sandpiper of California 3-Day Pass (black) . . . . .	\$1,789,169
5) Sandpiper of California Load-Out Bag (extra large, black) . . . . .	\$1,442,264
6) Sandpiper of California 3-Day Pass (reflector-type, black) . . . . .	\$698,013
7) Sandpiper of California Bugout Bag (coyote brown) . . . . .	\$647,729
8) Sandpiper of California Load-Out Bag (foliage) . . . . .	\$632,155
9) Sandpiper of California Load-Out Bag (extra-large, coyote brown) . . . . .	\$597,852
10) Sandpiper of California Giant Duffel Bag with Backpack . . . . .	\$591,763

*Sales figures are rounded off.*

*Source: AAFES*

promotions planned, with the emphasis on value.”

As the holidays approach, Tinoco said upcoming promotions during Back to School, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day and Black Friday “will continue to drive sales and traffic to the category during peak travel time.”

In the fall, the buyer said the Exchange plans to introduce a number of new brands online, including Victorinox, Herschel Bags, Thule, Case Logic and Kenneth Cole Reaction.

—E and C NEWS