

Cambridgeshire chooses personal protective equipment

Following a rigorous tender process, Cambridgeshire FRS has signed a ten year contract with Bristol Uniforms for the head-to-toe supply of firefighter PPE, including its latest XFlex™ design coats and trousers, which is planned for a spring 2016 roll-out

Cambridgeshire FRS, with more than 600 full-time and retained firefighters, has again opted to move to a Lease Managed Service which will see all its PPE, including fire coats and trousers, fire hoods, gloves and boots, supplied under a lease contract through which all the kit supplied will be regularly serviced by Bristol.

Once deployed, every firefighter will have their individually bar-coded PPE collected from one of 28 fire stations across the county on a pre-arranged maintenance cycle which will provide regular inspection, repair, washing, decontamination where required, condition coding and return within a seven-day turnaround.

One of the factors influencing Cambridgeshire's decision to move to Bristol for its PPE requirements was their ability to offer the ergonomically efficient and flexible XFlex™ design, which provides new levels of wearer comfort. This design was first introduced in 2012 and has become popular in the UK and overseas. Available in several variants, Cambridgeshire have chosen a Hainsworth TITAN® 1220 outer fabric in navy for their fire tunic – structural with a Gore Crosstech® Fireblocker moisture barrier. Additionally, for technical rescue and USAR operations, a fire tunic – lightweight jacket is supplied with a Kermel high-vis orange outershell and a Gore Crosstech® SR moisture barrier. The other

components of the head-to-toe PPE include a Bristol fire hood, Bristol leather structural glove, technical rescue glove and leather firefighter boots.

Cambridgeshire's Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Chris Strickland, on signing the contract in early June, said: "As a service we wanted to source robust yet lightweight PPE that would allow our staff to work safely and comfortably in most situations, whilst being able to turn to a high level of protection when dealing with compartment fires.

"By working closely with our staff we were able to develop an innovative specification that should provide us with the best of both worlds at a competitive price."

