

APF ASIA PACIFIC FIRE MAGAZINE



Integrated In-House Capability

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Throughout its 50 year involvement in the design and manufacture of world class firefighter PPE, Bristol has always retained full control over its design and production which is all undertaken in its own research and manufacturing facilities across Europe. Adopting an in-house strategy across its range of business processes has provided a level of resilience which, in turn, has enabled the company to retain that vital close control over all aspects of customer service. Supported globally by a network of specialist distributors in over 70 countries, this combination of resources underlines Bristol's commitment to its customers at a time when the need to demonstrate continuity, and deliver reliability, is greater than ever.

The process begins in the Product Innovation and Development department (PID) in Bristol where all product design begins. A team of highly skilled and experienced technical staff are responsible for innovation and the development of new products which go on to become the established technical garments of the future. Once trialed, tested and accredited to the appropriate standards, new designs are introduced, and contracts fulfilled, through an integrated manufacturing facility which incorporates in-line quality control. Full ensemble compatibility testing is undertaken with customers' head-to-toe specifications to ensure that, in combination, all the garments work effectively together to ensure full-body protection for the firefighter.

Any equipment supplied to firefighters must not only be fit for purpose, but be provided in the knowledge that the supplier has a proven track record in meeting these exacting standards. The qualities that procurement teams look for in their suppliers would normally include;

- An in-depth understanding of their requirements
- An ability to provide PPE solutions specifically suited to their needs
- Innovative design capabilities
- Close control over their manufacturing and quality control processes
- Reliability – the ability to meet agreed objectives on time
- Resilience – direct control over all key elements in the supply process and professional management of their own materials procurement programmes
- A well-resourced and financially sound business model
- Technical competence to support both product design and development as well as support services
- An integrated PPE supply facility, offering a cradle-to-grave service on all products supplied
- An ability to offer imaginative and flexible procurement options to suit different funding arrangements
- Experienced and well-trained staff at all touch points between themselves and supplier
- A sustainable business model

This fully integrated in-house business model has enabled the company to introduce a range of innovative garment solutions in recent years. These include the XFlex™ design platform which has seen the introduction of both the RescueFlex™ technical rescue and LayerFlex™ multi-purpose layered garments.

For more information, go to www.bristoluniforms.com



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