



INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR CONFERENCE MOST SUCCESSFUL EVER

Firefighter protection took centre stage when 41 delegates, representing 28 countries, gathered in Bristol recently to discuss developments in specialist protective clothing for municipal and industrial firefighters.

Bristol's 9th International Distributor Conference was held against a backdrop of economic recovery in many parts of the world following the longest period of economic recession and austerity in modern times. The prospect of the widespread loosening of public spending limits, coupled with renewed private investment, leading to an improved climate of optimism amongst the emergency services, was fully reflected in the agenda for this three day conference.

The biennial conference attracts increasingly strong support from the company's large, and growing, international network of distributors as well as their major supply chain partners. Gold sponsors for the event were W L Gore, A W Hainsworth and PBI Performance Products, all of whom were on hand to brief delegates on the latest developments in fibres and fabrics. Other partners included Dupont and 3M.

This year's event was focused on technical innovation, new products and performance standards. The opening day was largely devoted to technical matters with a series of presentations on European and International Standards, their growing importance to fire authorities and industrial users around the developed, and developing, world and how future changes would influence the market as new and updated standards are introduced later in 2014 and 2015.

Day 2 provided an opportunity for delegates to be fully briefed on Bristol's new product development programme. This included an outline of new products still in the pipeline as well as recent now products including the motorcycle fire suit range and the recently launched multipurpose layered garment, for which the first major contract in the UK has been signed by one of the country's largest fire & rescue services. A new range of own-manufactured fire gloves was unveiled at the conference. Delegates were also informed of the progress being made in the ICP mid-term Technological Refresh programme which will see new garments added to the range from the autumn of 2015.

Following the closure of the conference on Day 3, after the delegates had been taken on a tour of the West of England manufacturing site and Western Service Centre as well as the company's international distribution centre, Roger Startin, Bristol's joint managing director, said "This has certainly been our most successful, and best attended, distributor conference to date. The willingness of so many of our distributors to leave their businesses for a week, to travel from all corners of the globe to attend, is a clear indication of the value they place on the product and technical training that runs through our whole programme. It also underlines the importance they attach to being able to discuss and share opportunities and challenges with colleagues from different parts of the world. It is an invaluable learning experience for us all".

For more information about Bristol Uniforms or Bristol's managed services please contact either:

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18.07.2014 final (FTP)

Ends

Editor's note: Bristol Uniforms Ltd, founded in Bristol in 1801, has been, and remains, the UK's leading designer and manufacturer of protective clothing for municipal and industrial firefighters both in the UK and abroad with around 50% of sales being exported to over 110 countries across the world. The Company, which also supplies specialist PPE for other emergency services including the police and ambulance service, employs over 100 people.