



## **PPE Trial**

**February - March 2017**

### **Background**

In 2010 Bristol Uniforms were awarded a 15 year contract to provide HWFRS with Firefighting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), with a Fully Managed Service (FMS) for laundry, repair and replacement. The contract includes a mid-way review point in 2017, including the option to upgrade PPE to more a up-to-date design and technology, referred to as Technical Refresh.

### ***Purpose of trials***

HWFRS was involved in trials to develop the Technical Refresh PPE for Bristol in 2014. The purpose of the trials and evaluations in this paper is to provide evidence to support contract discussion and negotiation to secure the best value PPE for HWFRS for the remainder of the contract.

### ***Items trialled***

Utility Gloves. Two alternative makes of glove were trialled, from Bristol Uniforms and Safequip. The Utility Gloves would be additional to the current specification for Firefighting PPE.

Pluto Boot. The Pluto boot was trialled as a comparison to the Jolly boot from Bristol Uniforms that forms part of our current specification for Firefighting PPE.

Kermel Jacket. The Kermel jacket is produced by Bristol Uniforms. This lightweight jacket would be an additional item compared to the current specification for Firefighting PPE.

### ***Approach***

1. Trial locations were picked from across 3 districts
2. Stations were selected to gain feedback from shift, day-crewed and retained duty systems
3. Jackets were made to measure to enable a month of field trials at a day-crewed station
4. Evaluation forms contained a mix of open and closed questions

### **Evaluation Results**

Please refer to the documents in the appendix for a detailed breakdown of the evaluation results.



### **Gloves**

The feedback on the Safequip gloves was generally positive in terms of fit. They received good feedback on dexterity, grip and lightness to wear. The feedback on the Bristol gloves was less positive. Whilst some felt they were flexible, comfortable and a good fit, others felt they lacked the dexterity due to tailoring and the biggest criticism was that they are not waterproof.

### **Boots**

The feedback for the boots was more negative than positive, but this was partly due to an equal split between the boot being too loose and too tight, so correct fitting might be key to addressing this. The majority felt that it was not as good as the Jolly boot, but some people did say they felt it was good or similar to the Jolly boot. It was noted that the boot did not fit easily under the existing leggings, this would need to be checked with the Tech Refresh leggings for fit. Most did feel they were suitable for ladder use.

### **Jackets**

The jacket was very favourably received – lightweight and cooler than the structured firefighting PPE jacket yet a warm layer. Its shorter length made it more comfortable and there was excellent movement. Its high visibility was noted for driver safety, roadside rescue and general health and safety wear.

### **Summary**

The Safequip gloves were considered comfortable with good dexterity, whereas the Bristol utility gloves lacked dexterity and were not water proof. The Pluto boots had mixed reviews, most felt they were not as good as the current Jolly boot but this was not universal. The jackets were considered an excellent piece of PPE and would be a welcome addition to the PPE ensemble.

## **Appendix – Evaluation Results**

### Results Analysis



PPE evaluation results March 2017 01

### Forms



Scanned Evaluation Forms PPE March 201