



PPE/Clothing Committee

Minutes
Tuesday 16th November 2021
12:30-14:00hrs
Held Virtually Via Teams

In attendance:	Steve Topham – Chair, Brett Egan-Briers Vice Chair, Sarah Walsh, Clive Robinson, Jayne Moore, Kirk Kelleher, Scott Wilson, Mark Lloyd, Jim Holden, Roddy MacKinnon, Simon Anderson, Liz Davies, Elizabeth Noble
Apologies	Dave Lofthouse, Caroline Anderson and Mandy Beasley
<u>(Item 1)</u>	
1.	1.1 Welcome, introductions, apologies Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Caroline Anderson, Mandy Beasley and Dave Lofthouse
<u>(Item 2)</u>	
2.	2.1 Minutes and matters from previous meeting Minutes from September meeting accepted as an accurate reflection of the meeting
<u>(Item 3)</u>	
3.	3.1 Action Log Review Action Log accepted as an accurate reflection of the actions
<u>(Item 4)</u>	
4.	4.1 Update from Commercial Sub Committee Sarah Walsh (SW) provided an update on the Commercial sub committee. The group now has representation from across the regions and SW is looking at organising the first meeting of the commercial sub group.
<u>(Item 5)</u>	
5.	5.1 Update from Specialist PPE Committee

Chair provided an update on the specialist PPE sub group, Scott Wilson has stood down as the chair of specialist PPE sub group. Chair thanked Scott for his work and asked for any volunteers to take up the role.
No volunteers came forward in the meeting. Chair will take this away to find an alternative sub group chair.

(Item 6)

6. 6.1 Update from Workwear Sub Committee

Mark Lloyd(ML) provided an update from the workwear sub group.

ML discussed moving the fire service to a National uniform, as colleagues in both Police and Ambulance service currently have.

ML suggested a wardrobe solution so a range a garments would be provided which have all been agreed to Nationally and that individual services would then be able to procure the garments which suit their requirements the best.

There are a number of factors to be considered when procuring workwear among them are

- Sustainability
- Maternity/menopause wear
- Vegan considerations
- Religious considerations
- Disposal of workwear

The workwear group will be looking to find agreement on the length of frameworks that are put in place to allow services to join the framework and have time to realise the benefits of the framework.

When workwear is being worn under PPE need to ensure that the sizing and design of the workwear is correct.

Jim Holden (JH) confirmed that the considerations around garments being worn under PPE is also being taken up with the health and safety committee.

Jayne Moore (JM) raised the issue of colour of the garments within specifications and suggested that this is something that is addressed swiftly as this has previously been a contentious issue which has been difficult to reach agreement on.

Simon Anderson(SA), later picked up the issue of embroidered badges, the Greater Manchester badge currently cannot be added to shirts post production in the UK.

SA suggested that if badges could be added to shirts post production thus enabling services to keep their own identity that this would be a positive point for Chief Fire Officers.

Sarah Walsh commented that an option here would be to look at digital printing as an option to retained branding but move away from embroidery.

ML agreed with SW and commented on the importance of suppliers and market engagement.

VC updated that the work has already started with the NFCC and the Commercial transformation programme. There is an opportunity for an introduction of performance requirement for station wear ISO 21942 (station wear for fire fighters)

Both Scott Wilson and Sarah Walsh highlight the current supply chain issues being experienced globally, moving towards a wardrobe solution with potentially more than one supplier would provide some resilience into the supply chain.

	<p>ML highlighted that as individual services our workwear requirements are small and therefore the requirement for the sector to come together is vitally important in order for sector to be in a position to shape things commercially.</p> <p>Chair requested that ML starts to draft a high level proposal of options in order to determine the direction that workwear will take.</p> <p>As a consideration for the future Chair made the committee aware that the next step would be looking at Structural PPE in the same way.</p>
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(Item 7)

7.	<p>7.1 Update from Disposable Sub Committee</p> <p>Dave Lofthouse sent his apologies for this meeting. Chair updated the committee that there has not been great representation from across the regions and therefore EN will write out to the regions on behalf of the Chair requesting representatives for this group.</p> <p>Jayne Moore has volunteered from the Eastern region to sit on the sub group.</p>
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(Item 8)

8.	<p>8.1 Update from Structural PPE Committee</p> <p>Update from VC, Initial Structural PPE sub group meeting has been held.</p> <p>The group is currently in the process of setting up the terms of reference and meeting frequency.</p> <p>The group is looking to set up a survey of the performance requirements across the sector each regional rep on the committee will be going back to their regions for feedback.</p> <p>VC picked up on some of the themes discussed under the workwear update, of having options of garments which will fit individuals, in a wardrobe which would not only provide enhanced supply chains for services but also demonstrate inclusivity.</p>
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(Item 9)

9.	<p>9.1 Update from Risk Assessment Group</p> <p>This group is on their second meeting. VC stated that the Risk Assessment document has been reviewed and the first 12 pages of the document is out for comment, which is due back on the next meeting date of which is to be advised.</p> <p>The next meeting, covid permitting, will be a face to face meeting.</p>
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(Item 10)

10.	<p>10.1 Specifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on Market engagement and DPS Framework for Specialist PPE - Water Rescue draft standards <p>DPS specifications were and circulated before the meeting. Two specifications have not yet been shared, ICS Tabards and fire cadet uniform. These will be circulated in the coming weeks. VC requested that the specifications are shared within regions to ensure that requirements are being met.</p>
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	<p>The DPS will be going out to market beginning 2022 and the will be able to award contracts in March 2022.</p> <p>New ISO draft documents for water rescue will be shared in due course.</p> <p>VC has been assessing options for the Water rescue ensemble which had to be taken out of the specialist PPE process. One option is the YPO agreement, this has been looked at however VC doesn't think this would be an appropriate route, one reason being that there is not a specification included and is very generic.</p> <p>VC did recognise that services could utilise this option and write their own specification, however there is an agreed specification already in place.</p> <p>VC shared that it is likely that in the coming months another accelerated process will be undertaken for the supply of water rescue PPE.</p>
<u>(Item 11)</u>	
11	<p>11.1 NFCTP (Procurement Hub)</p> <p>In Tina Butlers absence EN provided an update from the Procurement Hub. New Procurement Hub website is currently going through its sign off process and will be ready to launch in the new year.</p>
<u>(Item 12)</u>	
12	<p>12.1 Inclusion</p> <p>Standing Item on the agenda.</p> <p>Chair raised the inclusion sub committee and the need to have a chair for this important group</p>
<u>(Item 13)</u>	
13	<p>13.1 BS EN and ISO Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ISO TC94 SC14 WG2 (11999-1) - PH14 <p>ISO Meeting has taken place, there is currently a review of the ISO 11999 series, which is the ISO equivalent of structural fire fighting. Previously this has been split in two, it is now going to be one level. The temperatures for testing will be increased, the document will come back to the committee for review and comment. The new standard will provide slightly higher minimum standards than EN469.</p> <p>During recent procurement for wildland fires an issue has been identified with ISO 16073 part 9 Fire hoods. The Water vapour resistance test is unachievable, this has been supported by independent test houses in the UK. This was taken back to ISO and they will revise, this will likely be through a corrigendum, the current level is equal to or below 5 and their proposal is to change this to equal to or below 10.</p> <p>This is the same level as the coveralls and current fire hoods would meet the requirement somewhere in the range of 6 and 7 are the current test results.</p> <p>The fire hood meets all the health and safety requirements and therefore under the specialist PPE framework the hood will be offered on the understanding that it is compliant with the health and safety requirements and UKCA certification with the intent that when the ISO has</p>

been updated there will be a technical refresh and suppliers will be required to have the relevant updates ISO 16073 certification.

Meeting of the UK fire Fighting committee PH14 this covered the points raised above. There is a joint working group on CBRN requirement, relating to the chemical repellence testing as mentioned in previous meetings. There is a ban on C8 chemicals and there will likely be a ban on C6 chemicals. The Ministry of Defence also have this issue with this for their garment testing and were looking into some market research, this hasn't progressed so VC is contacting National Resilience to find out what is happening with that piece of work.

Due to Brexit, we use the UKCA process, all OJUE published standards were taken over into UK law. Previously the published standard for structural fire fighting was EN4692005. There has been the publication of EN4692020. The Department of Business, Energy, Industry Strategy and the Office for Product safety and Standards, have asked PH32 committee at BSI to decide what to do with EN4692020, three options have been given:

1. Designate the standard bring into the UK
2. Designate with restrictions *
3. Not designate

VC provided some background to EN4692005, this standard had been reviewed and revised in 2014 however there were issues with the new standard so it went straight back into the review process. During that review process VC made a case that the minimum performance levels within EN469 were too low compared with the standards within the UK.

VC got agreement that the standard would need to be revised, however to change the standard as whole would need to buy in from all other EU countries it was agreed to change to a levelled system – Level 2 (EU) and Level 3 (UK) where level 3 is the higher level. The Proposal was agreed by PH32, this was taken forward to the SEN meeting in 2018 where it was voted down.

Therefore no changes were made and a national foreword was included within the standard to state the UK Fire services felt there is a need to have higher levels and better protection for firefighters.

This brings us up to date EN4692020 has no significant changes since 1996 and the question is now being posed do we want to designate this into UK law, however if the UK want to make any changes it will have to go through the same process which failed to be approved in 2018.

Both Simon Anderson and Roddy Mackinnon echoed and supported VC's concerns for ensuring that fire fighters are provided with the correct level of protection.

Jayne Moore also supported VC, currently an investigation in Essex regarding an incident involving gloves, JM asked that if anyone had experienced any issue using Bristol's gloves to inform Jayne.

VC went on to say that his suggested way forward would be for Jim Holden to take the issue back to the NFCC health and Safety committee and jointly a recommendation should be mandated by NFCC operations.

Jim Holden agreed to take the issue back to the health and safety committee, VC to provide a written summary to Jim Holden.

*There is a question over what Designate with Restriction means for the UK VC will obtain clarification on this and share with the committee in due course.

(Item 14)	
14	<p>14.1 Items for further Consideration/Regional Updates (risks, emerging issues & successes)</p> <p>- Industry Representatives Meeting</p> <p>Sarah Walsh requested that any issues regarding gloves are sent to Sarah as well Jayne as the framework owner Sarah needs to have visibility of any issues. ML has been asked to set up a regional procurement group for Yorkshire/ Humber side their first meeting is 24th January 2022</p> <p>Chair noted that Steve Vincent is due to retire in February 2022 and would like to formally thank Steve for his valuable contributions to the committee and wish him well in his retirement.</p>
(Item 15)	
15	<p>15.1 Next Meeting</p> <p>It was agreed to move meetings back to quarterly basis. Hopefully next meeting will be a face to face meeting – EN to organise.</p>