Integrated Clothing Project

This circular contains information about developments in the Integrated Clothing Project and lists details of forthcoming road shows around the country.

For further information, contact:

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1.0 Background

1.1 Firebuy Ltd is the body established in April 2006 to oversee the National Procurement Strategy for the Fire and Rescue. It procures goods and services and makes these available to Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs). It also takes the lead in subsequent contract management and service level monitoring. Firebuy Ltd supports FRAs in achieving standardisation and interoperability and works with suppliers to ensure that the goods and services they provide meet the needs of the Fire & Rescue Service.

1.2 The Integrated Clothing Project (ICP) is the first national procurement project for clothing – from station wear, sportswear through to Personal Protective Equipment for the Fire & Rescue Service. Its long term aim is to create a national identity that addresses equality and diversity issues and to deliver a standard level of appropriate protection and interoperability by means of a standard specification for firefighters nationally. The ICP contract is in 3 parts, comprising:

- Purchase Only (PO) whereby clothing and equipment is purchased without a commitment to ongoing maintenance
- Purchase with Managed Services (PMS), where the FRA owns the kit but outsources as many of the services to the supplier as it wants to via a menu system
- Fully Managed Service (FMS) - where both kit and maintenance are provided

1.3 The first stage (PO) of the ICP contract suite has now been signed and the next stage for PMS and FMS should be signed in early 2008. Firebuy Ltd and Bristol Uniforms Ltd will be holding a series of road shows around the country to promote the benefits of the ICP and to demonstrate the work undertaken in the garment trials.

2.0 Garment Trials

2.1 For the first time in the history of the service, protective clothing options provided by four bidding companies and worn by volunteer firefighters from around the country, were tested during stringent garment trials at the Health & Safety Laboratory in Buxton, Derbyshire in the summer of 2006.

2.2 The garments were subjected to in depth physiological loading, ergonomic and compatibility testing, on a scale that has not been seen in the service before whilst, for the first time ever, real consideration was given to equality issues in an increasingly diverse workforce.

2.3 Copies of the DVD highlighting the garment trials will be available at all of the ICP road shows.

3.0 Road shows

3.1 There are six road shows planned around the country which will give the background to the ICP and talk about the garment trials.

3.2 The dates and places of the road shows are as follows:–

21st November – Cleveland Fire & Rescue Service – Hartlepool
23rd November – Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service – Alfreton

4th December – Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service – Carmarthen

6th December – Surrey Fire & Rescue Service – Reigate

9th January – Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service - Stevenage

11th January – Avon Fire & Rescue Service - Avonmouth

4.0 **Further Information**

4.1 For further information on ICP and the road shows please contact the ICP project team on 020 7587 6260 or by email to ugo.odogwu@firebuy.gov.uk.

4.2 For further information on the National Procurement Strategy for the Fire and Rescue Service please contact: fsed6@communities.gsi.gov.uk.