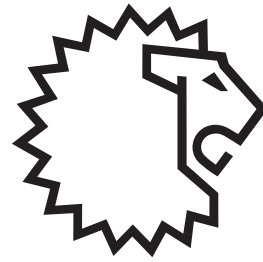


# Flexibility to meet the needs of Fire and Police



## LION APPAREL

As one of the world's largest providers of PPE solutions, Lion is continuously looking to the future with the aim of creating new innovations to meet changing customer needs

**S**INCE THE COMPANY'S high profile arrival in the UK in 1998 with the award of a TotalCare contract for London Fire brigade, Lion has become one of the leading suppliers to the UK Fire Service and now numbers some 15 brigades among its customers, as well as the British Fire Service College, numerous Airports and industrial Brigades. In 2003, Lion expanded its PPE solutions to UK police forces.

At the time of its introduction, the concept of TotalCare, where the manufacturer assumed all the risk, liability and maintenance for PPE from the brigade, was revolutionary. The success of this concept is as a result of the genuine partnership that Lion develops with its customers, from the initial risk assessment, through to the regular performance reviews. One of the key benefits of the system is still that all risk and liability lies with Lion Apparel once the contract is in place and the risk assessment has been agreed by the purchasing organisation.

## Standards

Lion offers an absolute and independent guarantee that PPE meets performance standards. The company ensures that an independent test house undertakes a full technical product review through the life of each TotalCare contract.

This consists of a random sampling of the initial delivery of garments to ensure they fully meet the agreed specification. Items will then be taken out of service, again on a random basis, and tested to make sure they still meet the specification and fully comply with any relevant standards. The reviewer is completely independent and will liaise directly with the customer.

This regime is a logical extension of the independent performance review that the company has always carried out with its customers. It is essential that customers have the confidence that their PPE is performing to the appropriate standards, consistent with certification.



All laundry and repairs offered by Lion as part of a TotalCare contract are undertaken in house by Lion personnel using Lion owned equipment. The company believes this gives much better control of both the processes and the data collection than by using a myriad of subcontractors.

However, the company recognises that there are many brigades and police forces that may have very different PPE needs and TotalCare will not be the most appropriate solution for all. That's why the company also operates a flexible approach that includes Direct Sale and Prime Vendor contracts.

Direct Sale is a traditional approach in which the customer buys their PPE with no maintenance contract. It means that a customer who simply wants to buy any products, from textile-based PPE through to boots, can do so with the confidence that the product will be delivered on time and in the sizes requested.

Customers can therefore buy any item of PPE in any quantity.

Lion's Prime Vendor solution offers customers the opportunity to dispense completely with stocks of stationwear items such as shirts, trousers, T shirts etc. Prime Vendor provides a completely managed system that clothes a brigade or police force, satisfying both

**In the future, front line responders will wear specialised kit that is best suited to the task they are undertaking**

PPE, stationwear and corporate wear needs. The system will replace garments at almost immediate notice, and is developed to meet each brigade's unique needs.

Andy Wightman, Managing Director at Lion Apparel says: "Lion really made its name in the UK with the TotalCare system but we also have a number of other options for customers that want to use a different approach.

## Fire and Police

"Flexibility is key to our approach to meeting the needs of the Fire and Police services and we recognise that as modernisation continues, manufacturers will have to remain flexible to be successful.

"In the future, front line responders will wear specialised kit that is best suited to the task that they are undertaking. It doesn't matter how waterproof your PPE is if you are up to your waist helping flood victims, you will get wet in full fire kit. Similarly, the impact of heat stress would be greatly reduced if you weren't wearing full fire kit in summer to control a field on fire in open countryside.

"As more technological solutions in PPE become affordable, so more varied and flexible protective systems will become reality." 