

PROTECTING FIREFIGHTERS

PROTECTING FIREFIGHTERS through the development of a gender based integrated PPE assessment facility

THE NEW FACILITY - our rationale

The BTTG 'RALPH' manikin test system was introduced in the early 1990s. Since that time it has been used extensively in the assessment and testing of protective clothing ensembles and single items of clothing.

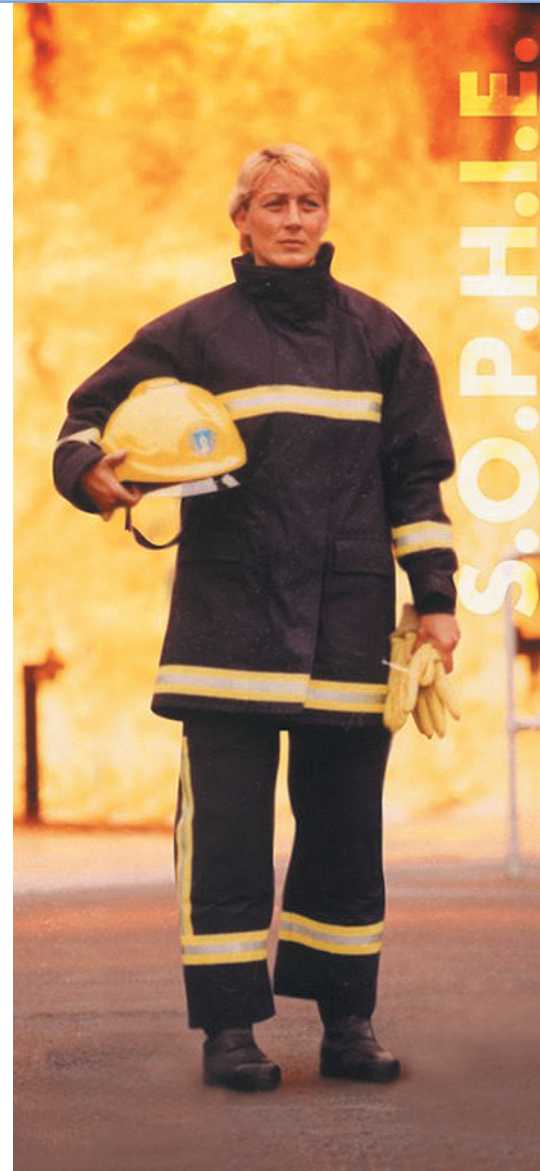
The most appropriate way that the objective for assessing clothing for female firefighters and female industry workers etc, can be achieved is to design a facility that features interchangeable 'female' and 'male' manikins, differing only in their shape and size. Compliance with the draft EN ISO standard is achieved in the 'male' operating mode. Most existing manikin test systems, including RALPH, in addition to being 'male' are not able to be fully dressed in a PPE ensemble. They cannot therefore assess the integration of PPE ensembles with respect to providing sufficient protection for all regions of the wearer's body. This is usually because wiring and/or supporting framework interferes with dressing and/or with the attainment of sufficient heat exposure.

Our new test system avoids these problems by having all wiring exiting at the manikins feet which permits dressing with helmet/firehood/breathing apparatus without obstruction. The hands are also able to be dressed with gloves so as to interface realistically with the cuffs of clothing.

SPONSORS OF OUR NEW FACILITY

BTTG wishes to thank the following organisations for their technical and financial contributions to the development of this new facility:

- Health and Safety Executive (UK government agency)
- Fire Services Inspectorate (UK government department)
- Fire Research Division of ODPM (UK government department)
- Scottish Office Home Department (UK government department)
- UK Chief Fire Officers Association
- Bristol Uniforms Limited
- Celanese PBI
- W.L. Gore & Associates (UK) Limited



* SOPHIE

"System Objective Protection against Heat In Emergencies"

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