

Press release | No. 56, October 02, 2024

## Dräger helps Sellafield clean up with Technology for Life

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Dräger, an international leader in the fields of medical and safety technology, has provided the Sellafield Nuclear site with 65 self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) PSS Airboss® sets and six Merlin® telemetry entry control boards (ECB) to protect firefighters from the inhalation of dangerous gases during incidents and training events.

Sellafield, formerly known as Windscale, and situated on the Cumbrian coastline, is Europe's largest nuclear site, with the most diverse range of nuclear facilities in the world on a single site. Sellafield was initially constructed as a nuclear deterrent following the Second World War and later became the world's first nuclear power station to export electricity on a commercial scale to the public grid.

Today, Sellafield repackages and stores nuclear materials, while mitigating risks to the environment. The vast inventory and scale of the site (650 acres) and its labyrinth of more than 1,200 buildings, plants and silos, mean fire safety is of critical importance. A specialist fire and rescue service protects the site from fire, chemical and nuclear related incident risk, dedicated to the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) during its formal decommissioning process.

To reflect its mission to provide safety for future generations, Sellafield Fire & Rescue Service required an upgrade to its existing safety equipment to further protect on-site personnel and its 85-strong fire crew from harm in a high-risk and potentially hazardous working environment.

The team assessed many different products to protect their employees. After thorough consultation, Dräger's PSS® AirBoss Connect SCBA was selected because of its advanced functionality and future proofed design, as well as its best-in-class ergonomics and light weight. Through shifting the centre of gravity relationship between the user and the set, the weight of the PSS® AirBoss is carried by the legs and pelvis, rather than the shoulders and back. This reduces the risk of strain-related injuries and fatigue when wearing the set operationally, as well as extending potential working duration as a result of reduced physical exertion.

The PSS® AirBoss SCBA links to the Merlin® Telemetry system, enabling continuous remote monitoring of the wearers' vital core temperatures and key statistics including air pressure and remaining cylinder volume, overseen and communicated through the Entry Control Board (ECB). When the user enters, a tally is inserted into the ECB, wearers of the SCBA are added, establishing a direct communication channel to Entry Control.

Page 1 / 3

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In utilising the telemetry system, Sellafield will enable a means for quick and strategic response in the event of an emergency. This will be particularly useful given that a number of buildings located at the Sellafield site comprise of thick concrete walls which act as a shield against the dangers of radiation, but render location services such as GPS and direction-based location systems ineffective.

Users of the PSS® AirBoss Connect can also combine additional safety and communication systems into a single, integrated safety solution thanks to enhanced Bluetooth capability, which also opens up an opportunity to connect new and emerging Dräger technologies in the future.

Dräger will also support Sellafield in the training of its specialist fire crew, station managers and on-site personnel in how to safely and securely use the PSS® AirBoss Connect SCBA set and Merlin® telemetry system.

Sean Hevey, former Station Manager at Cumbria Fire and Rescue and serving Watch Manager at Sellafield Ltd, says Dräger's service and tailored support during the life of its products exceeds expectations: "The ability of a company as big as Dräger to provide tailored and unique services to customers like us is truly exceptional. Joining Dräger user groups also allow us to seek guidance, advice and support from similar services within similar industrial applications. This is invaluable and provides confidence that a network of professionals are at our doorstep should we need them."

Elizabeth Milward, Marketing Manager Emergency and Rescue Services at Draeger Safety UK, says Sellafield has an admirable focus on personal firefighter health and safety: "The complex scale and nature of the site required products that protected the fire and rescue crew and site personnel from the dangers of fire in the midst of added chemical and nuclear risks.

"By integrating the connectivity of the AirBoss and the Merlin® telemetry system with one another, not only will the team benefit from enhanced personal safety and communication, but also from compatibility with the next wave of technological developments and enhancements."

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#### **Dräger. Technology for Life®**

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