

# CBRN News

## PRODUCT WATCH

### Baltic Prediction

Bruhn Newtech announced that their NBC Analysis software had been chosen by the Latvian MoD over other comparable systems. A Latvian MoD spokesman pointed out that they were choosing NBC Analysis to remain compliant with Nato standards and to prepare for CBRN threats. Latvia is keen to develop their warning and reporting and hazard prediction capability and they have been investing in exercises such as Brave Beduin in Denmark to ensure that they are Nato and NRF compliant.

### Lord Protector of Her Majesty's Constabulary

Helmet Integrated Systems announced that their Cromwell ER1(3) helmet was chosen by the UK's Police CBRN Centre for use with their CBRN clothing. The thermoplastic helmet has a visor, for use without respirator, and can be adjusted while wearing protective gloves and respirator. The helmet is part of the protective ensemble from Remploy Frontline including their CR1 and Avon's FM12.



### Zut alors!

The French Minister of Defence, Hervé Morin, was amazed to find that a German decontamination company, Kärcher Futuretech, was not a French company at the Eurosatory

exhibition! Since he owned a commercial Kärcher unit, he had assumed that it was a French company. Thanks to the presence of Helmut Stelzmüller this was quickly corrected!

### Putting out fires

Cristanini, the Italian decontamination company, announced that they had sold their Sanijet C921 trailer to the Paris Fire Brigade. Cristanini claim that the C921 can do chemical, biological and radiological decontamination. This follows on from their recent contract to supply a mobile modular decontamination system for the NRBC Department of the French National Police.

### M50 finally signed

Avon Protection must have breathed a sigh of relief when their \$112 million contract to supply the four US services with the M50 respirator was signed. Avon will supply 100,000 M50s over a five-year period and pricing has been supplied for additional requirements for spares and masks. Never in doubt as a contract, it will be odd to see the M40 and M17 become items of historical note.

### Proengin on the underground

Proengin's AP4C has been chosen by the UK's Metropolitan Police; apparently the defining reason was their ability to work in the London Underground without false alarming.

### Smiths News

Smiths Detection has been showing the Beta version of their Smart Bio Sensor (SBS) for at least a year now, but they have finally launched it. SBS samples air, uses an eight-sensor array and particle counter to detect airborne pathogens. Using fluorescence and particle counting is not necessarily a new technique, but it does add a new string to the bow of Smith's bio detection capability.

Smiths also launched the Sabre EXV, their homemade explosive detector. Utilising IMS, Sabre has been designed to detect hydrogen

peroxide, and after taking an air sample will alarm up to ten seconds after.

They have also partnered with Torion Technologies to provide a Gas Chromatography Toroidal Ion Trap Mass Spectrometry (GC-TMS) detector. Smiths and Bruker have been squaring up for over a year and the lack of any GCMS in the Smiths portfolio has been good for Bruker's business. They have described the new device as expected to be highly portable for trace (and above) threat assessment.

Finally, they also announced a \$28.5 million JCAD order, taking the total order value for the US military up to \$52.3 million.

### Big in Japan

The Japanese Ground Self Defence Force exercised an option to purchase two more Biological Aerosol Warning System (BAWS) from Lockheed Martin. BAWS utilises particle counting as its detection method and comes with a solid-state air-mass sensor, humidity sensor, a compass, GPS and a radio receiver. BAWS will be used by the CBRN Defence Unit of the Japanese Ground Self Defence Force.

### Remploy's CR1 becomes Class 2!

Remploy announced that their CR1 ensemble has passed SEI's class 2 NFPA testing. The ensemble tested was suit, gloves, boots and SCBA/respirator. Remploy suggested that this showed their commitment to the customer and future proofing their products.

### So do Demron!

Radiation Shield Technology (RST) announced their NFPA Class 2 Certification, and now claim to have the only suit able to offer chem, bio, rad and nuclear incident protection. RST are the manufacturer of Demron-W, which they claim is able to protect against RN contamination thanks to their radiopaque, liquid metal, nanopolymeric compound clothing. Demron passed all Class 2 requirements of their 1994-2007 through Underwriters Laboratories.

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### Going Dutch

Argon Electronics, manufacturer of detection simulation devices, announced that they had delivered 20 GID-M-SIM training systems to the Netherlands MoD as parts of their ACADS programme. This order follows on from their previous order to supply them with 175 CP100 simulators based on the Environics Chempro 100 detector – which is also part of the same programme.

### OBITUARIES

The world of chemical detection was moved by the death of Dr Bob Turner OBE on 4 June. Dr Turner was Director of Technology Acquisition for Smiths Detection and internationally acknowledged as one of the foremost authorities on IMS. Over a 25-year period he supervised many projects, such as the US Acada programme, and had many key patents to his name. He leaves a widow and three grown-up children.

### THREAT WATCH

#### Well, that's a neat ending...

Bruce Irvins, a scientist at Fort Detrick, who was recently named as a prime scientist in the anthrax investigation, committed suicide with an overdose of Tylenol. Irvins had been under investigation for over a year, and (in what can't be just good timing) after the conclusion of the Hatfill case (see June news) – which he can have watched only with horror – was about to be indicted for the 2001 anthrax attacks. Irvins had also had to undergo psychiatric help, leading some to conclude that he was psychotic. The parallels with the UK's David Kelly are astounding, a well-respected scientist, hounded by the government until the pressure causes him to take his own life – allowing the original problem to come to a “natural” end. (Though no-one suggested Kelly was psychotic.) At time of writing there is rumoured to be additional information which will corroborate why Irvins was a key suspect. Presumably if the evidence was that strong they wouldn't have waited this long to bring him in...

#### And you can stay dead this time...

Al-Qaeda's “chemical weapons expert” has apparently been killed for the second time. An airstrike in South Waziristan, the village of Azam Warsak to be exact, apparently was the end of Midhat Mursi al-

Sayid Umar. Midhat, also known as Abu Khbab al-Masri, an Egyptian national with a \$5 million reward on his head, was reported killed in 2006 in a strike on the Al-Zawahiri region of Pakistan. Pakistan was naturally aggrieved about the strike in the tribal areas, which it nominally controls, though it does have its own problems in the area and has re-launched military operations to try and gain a firmer control. Al-Masri's death was later “confirmed” by an Al-Qaeda internet message.

#### Fish and tetrodotoxin?

Just to prove that scarcely a month goes by when some nut doesn't try and do something silly in his kitchen, comes the story about Edward Bachner. Mr Bachner, a Chicago resident, posed as a doctor to order 98 milligrams of the puffer fish toxin tetrodotoxin, which, we were told, is 1,200 times more deadly than cyanide (is there a chart somewhere that provides this information at a glance?)! Mr Bachner was picked up by a FBI agent after the company that he bought it from got suspicious. Quite why he needed such a quantity is not known, presumably to defend himself against the UN or the voices in his head. The fact that he took out a \$5 million insurance contract on his wife (with a bonus if she was killed by terrorists) is probably accidental.

#### And another one...

Well, we'd hate a month to go by without someone in the US being charged with possession of ricin. Ricin has now been found in the cell of a former Las Vegas poker dealer who was conspiring with a woman to kill her partner and two sons. Presumably, instead of being charged with attempted murder, he will now be charged with attempted possession of a weapon of mass destruction and sentenced to be frozen in carbonite and fired into space – or whatever happens to these individuals.

#### French military cuts... and CBRN increases?

The huge cuts in military manpower (-54,000) and big-ticket procurement items has been balanced out by France rejoining Nato's military command and an increased focus in defending against NRBC (CBRN) weapons. One of the major concerns was France's nuclear arsenal, which will remain, said President Nicolas Sarkozy, “strictly national”. He

suggested that the terrorist threat was “real” and “here” and that the use of CBRN weapons is more likely. Without going into detail, he suggested that French troops would get more equipment to deal with these weapons. Sounds like good news for French NRBC companies!

#### When you're in a hole...

Good to see that stupidity is not limited to any country – Assad Sarwar and accomplices lost their opportunity to blow up their targets when UK council workmen cleared their chemical stash away. After buying a bike on eBay for 99p, Sarwar decided to go to Wales and buy hydrogen peroxide because Wales was close and he had never been there before! He was planning to use the hydrogen peroxide to make HMTD, and stashed the chemicals in a nearby wood when the ground proved too hard to dig in. He had returned home to look up the best way to dig a hole (I say again!) and, when armed with his research, returned to find the chemical missing, apparently taken by the council. All eight defendants deny conspiracy to murder and endanger aircraft.

#### Old chestnuts come home to roost

Syrian General Mohammed Suleiman was assassinated, according to Syrian officials, by gunmen in the city of Tartous on 1 August. There has been no stated reason for his assassination, but rumours (allegedly from American “Intelligence Sources”) are circling that it was down to his involvement in the Syrian nuclear project and his transfer of chemical weapons from Iraq to Syria in 2003. Maybe... perhaps he was also the gunman on the grassy knoll and the Mafia were worried that he would spill the beans on Area 51...



*The JPEO's Courtney Maisch helps David Levitt pick the winner at the Joint CBRN conference*  
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