

PRESS RELEASE

Latest CHARNAUD firefighting bunker, rescue suits are a world-first

14 November 2017: Top-end, super hi-tech protective clothing manufacturer CHARNAUD of Ladysmith in KwaZulu-Natal has emerged as a global leader in heat-stress mitigation in the firefighting industry with its latest AIR-LITE firefighting gear. These garments are made from a revolutionary ensemble system that is a world-first in terms of protection, comfort, breathability, and low weight.

The company's latest bunker gear and fire-rescue garments, named CHARNAUD AIR-LITE and CHARNAUD RESCUE-LITE respectively, were unveiled and launched officially at the 31st Southern African Emergency Services Institute (SAESI) conference and exhibition held at Nasrec, Johannesburg from 29 to 3 November.

The new CHARNAUD AIR-LITE was used by the country's top fire and rescue 'athletes' in the Toughest Fire Fighter competition staged at the exhibition. "CHARNAUD is very proud that they took all the top honours, both in the Individual and team events," Founder **Andrew Charnaud** comments. Some of these firefighters sported CHARNAUD garments that were more than ten years' old, and still in perfectly good operating condition.

"Not only are we now able to offer the industry the best garments available in terms of our latest developments, but even our older versions are proving virtually indestructible, which is very gratifying for us," Andrew points out.

The unique proprietary and inherently flame-resistant fabric system resists ultraviolet (UV) degradation over 200% better than the next best on the world market. This is coupled with low weight, increased comfort, high levels of breathability, reduced stress, and a superior ergonomic design, yet maintaining amazingly high levels of protection.

The protection level afforded by the CHARNAUD AIR-LITE suit, against the four benchmark heat- and flame-exposure tests for firefighting suits, recorded figures significantly over-and-above the highest Level 2 requirement in the EN469 European and global standard. "This is a major coup for a South African company, and shows our commitment to innovation and ongoing product development in the firefighting industry," Andrew comments.

In addition to the CHARNAUD AIR-LITE bunker suit, and to complement the range, was the launch of the brand-new, state-of-the-art CHARNAUD RESCUE-LITE. It is amazingly lightweight at only 2.8 kg for the entire suit, ergonomically-designed, and very comfortable. "It was really the star of the show," Andrew reveals.

The CHARNAUD AIR-LITE and RESCUE-LITE suits have a unique system certified as totally resistant and impervious to the intrusion of all pathogens and bacteria. These garments can be washed regularly at 74°C, which will destroy and remove all pathogens and bacteria, or at 60°C for normal working everyday conditions, where pathogens and bacteria are not present.

"Normally fire suits in Europe are washed a maximum of 17 to 20 times during the garments' life, whereas the new CHARNAUD AIR-LITE outer fabric has been test-washed 500 times," Andrew highlights.

In terms of breathability, the CHARNAUD AIR-LITE suit is over 300% more breathable than the highest European Level 2 standard in the EN469 international benchmark standard which is, in turn, a lot higher than the USA National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) bunker garments.

CHARNAUD has undergone a remarkable evolution since the company was established in 1975 in a back room in Jacobs, Durban with three employees. Today it produces several unique globally-recognised brands, supplying 21 of the biggest companies in the world in each end market it serves, across sectors and to 60 countries. "We export our products with pride and confidence, all the way from Ezakheni in KwaZulu-Natal. Our tradition lives on, and we are assured of exciting times ahead," Andrew concludes.

Ends

Notes to the Editor

To download hi-res images for this press release, please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the CHARNAUD link to view the company's press office.

About CHARNAUD

CHARNAUD believes in a 'head-to-foot' approach to safety, and has a moral obligation to provide its clients with the best quality products that are certified to the strictest local and international quality standards. All products are extensively researched and tested before being distributed across the globe. As a result, the company's unique products are regarded as some of the best in the world.

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