



A Step Up for CBRN Protection

Attacks or accidents involving chemicals, biological agents, or radiation are likely the most dangerous a law enforcement officer can face. The protective equipment that officers rely on in such incidents must meet the highest standards.

Equipment Performance Standards

Existing performance standards for such equipment serve other first responders well, but a law enforcement officer's mission requires different performance requirements for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) protective equipment.

To address that need, the law enforcement community asked the Office of Justice Programs' National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to develop a standard specifically for CBRN protective equipment used by law enforcement officers. The standard will focus on protective ensembles designed to provide full-body protection against exposure to CBRN hazards. When completed, the standard will be published by NIJ.

Collaborating With Partners

NIJ has been working closely with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the U.S. Departments of Homeland Security (DHS) and Defense (DoD) to leverage related efforts where possible to expedite release of the new NIJ standard.

In August 2007, NIJ organized a special technical committee composed of subject matter experts, many of whom are members of the law enforcement community. Other agencies represented include NFPA, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, DHS, DoD, the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Tactical Officers Association, the National Sheriffs' Association, and organizations that test and certify personal protective equipment.

The committee identified the specific needs and requirements of law enforcement and shortfalls in existing equipment standards and test methods, such as auditory requirements and ergonomic tests. The committee is addressing these shortfalls, determining conformity assessment requirements, and generating a new CBRN ensemble standard.

For more information, contact Debra Stoe, program manager, 202-616-7036, debra.stoe@usdoj.gov; Vanessa Castellanos, program support, 202-353-3182, vanessa.castellanos@usdoj.gov; or Casandra Robinson, program support, 202-305-2596, casandra.robinson@usdoj.gov.

The National Law Enforcement and
Corrections Technology Center System
Your Technology Partner

www.justnet.org
800-248-2742



This article was reprinted from the Summer 2008 edition of *TechBeat*, the award-winning quarterly newsmagazine of the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center System, a program of the National Institute of Justice under Cooperative Agreement #2005-MU-CX-K077, awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Analyses of test results do not represent product approval or endorsement by the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice; the National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce; or Lockheed Martin. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The National Institute of Justice is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the Community Capacity Development Office; the Office for Victims of Crime; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART).