

FIRE

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**EFE
Award
Winners**

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Winners of the blue-light 'Oscars'

See centre pages for more on the winners of this year's Excellence in Fire & Emergency Awards 2017

Grenfell Tower Congress

FIRE reports on November's hard-hitting Congress, Out of the flames: A fire safe future after the tragedy of Grenfell Tower

Primetech's forward looking innovations

How the company's advanced solutions are supporting innovation throughout the UK Fire Service



Managing Director **Henry Walker** reports on how proven technologies are helping Primetech support the fire sector's ongoing drive for increased collaboration, greater efficiency, operational effectiveness and cost reduction

The flexibility of Primetech's lightweight MultiPod system for sub 3.5 tonne vehicles enables them to be used for Ultra Lightweight Cobra firefighting or as Community Response Vehicles.

Primetech's forward looking innovations

Primetech has transformed the world leading (and proven) Coldcut™ COBRA cutting extinguisher system into a self-propelled unit that presents a viable proposition for inclusion in smaller vehicles (sub 3.5 tonnes) as a complement to frontline appliances, especially in challenging on-call, rural, or hard-to-reach locations.

Fire Services are in a state of constant transition – as new challenges emerge, and new, more innovative and cost effective ways of working come into consideration.

Primetech, the systems integrator and technology developer, has been following these developments in Fire Service thinking very closely, in particular by attending conferences, seminars and workshops run by the National Fire Chiefs Council, and participating in trials and other events run by individual fire services as well as roadshows organised by its own team.

Feedback from such thought leadership events has been a key driver behind the company's ground-breaking innovations over many years. One key driver has been the move towards cost-effective, innovative systems, such as

Primetech's demountable MultiPod system designed for sub 3.5 tonne vehicles.

Following product launches at the Emergency Services Show in September, Primetech has seen a surge of interest in its new and upgraded systems – most prominent being the Ultra Lightweight Cobra cutting extinguisher.

Primetech has transformed the world leading (and proven) Coldcut™ COBRA cutting extinguisher system into a self-propelled unit. This, we believe, presents a viable



“Primetech’s Ultra Lightweight Coldcut COBRA cutting extinguisher system in the Primetech MultiPod presents a viable proposition for complementing front-line appliances, especially in challenging on-call, rural, or hard-to-reach locations”

proposition for inclusion in smaller vehicles (sub 3.5 tonnes) as a complement to frontline appliances, especially in challenging on-call, rural, or hard-to-reach locations.

Fire services are becoming more receptive to the idea of using smaller, agile 4 x 4 vehicles with powerful firefighting capabilities, to complement more traditional appliances.

Following extensive discussions and feedback from demonstrations of the Cobra’s powerful capabilities on smaller vehicles, the consensus is building that as long as these vehicles are introduced and used within the concept they are designed for, and appropriate to the service’s Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs), they will be a valuable option for many rural environments.

Agile, off-the-shelf 4x4 vehicles, which offer significant cost saving benefits, are not intended to replace traditional

fire appliances, of course, but are being reviewed as an additional solution where appropriate, ‘another tool in the toolbox’ for the changing and challenging roles of today’s fire and rescue services.

Potentially, smaller vehicles offer solutions where a traditional fire appliance might encounter problems in being able to reach locations, due to the environment they are operating in, or crewing difficulties.

This is particularly the case where firefighting cover is predominantly on-call or retained duty personnel. In a retained location, a smaller vehicle could, for example, be crewed with two firefighters provided it is deployed under strict operating procedures. This is a solution for responding more effectively to incidents when there is a shortage of crew in the area. This enables the initial response to arrive and start to take control of the incident until the traditional appliance arrives.

The Ultra Lightweight Cobra system has the key benefit of allowing fires to be tackled from a safe position outside burning buildings or structures. Add to this the benefits of utility-style and other smaller vehicles and Primetech’s version of the Cobra cutting extinguisher system delivers an affordable, self-propelled unit, enhanced with the addition of a conventional branch-style misting nozzle, with enormous potential to buy valuable, ‘stop-the-clock’ time for reducing fire spread.

One aspect of the smaller vehicle option that is particularly appealing is that of business continuity/resilience during the winter months (4-wheel-drive vehicles can usually still respond to remote communities in snow and ice).

There is also currently on social media the trend of fire services asking the public to think carefully about parking. Traditional appliances seem to be held up frequently, waiting for parked vehicles to be moved to allow them to pass through, or worse, not being able to proceed at all. Again, this is a positive argument for including smaller rapid response vehicles in fleets, as they can pass through congested areas more easily, arriving at incidents sooner. Rapid response vehicles tested in a number of scenarios have identified some of the following benefits:

- They can enable faster response to incidents, thereby reducing attendance time;
- They can help deal with the challenges of recruitment and availability of on-call staff;
- Smaller vehicles can proceed more easily through congested roads and traffic.

Such response vehicles can easily be deployed to smaller fires – bin or rubbish fires, for example – freeing up traditional fire appliances to deal with major incidents.

Primetech’s lightweight MultiPod system for sub 3.5 tonne vehicles is proving popular even without the

FireCam On Call cameras

The new FireCam OnCall range of helmet and body-worn cameras have 4K resolution, are heat-resistant and can transmit imagery using their own WiFi, and for longer range they can be linked to Primetech’s MultiNet Comms system using COFDM Mesh WiFi. Imagery can also be recorded onto SD cards for auditing and monitoring purposes, and for backup.

Some services are already using or evaluating the cameras to record imagery from major incidents to use in training lessons. The cameras are so high spec that HD versions were chosen by an award-winning production company which had a requirement to record broadcast quality footage (onto SD cards) for a live action documentary series that will be shown in the autumn on the UKTV’s Really Channel. The documentary follows firefighters undertaking their various professional roles in West Midlands Fire Service. More information can be found on <https://www.wmfs.net/really-lands-first-ever-uk-fire-documentary-series/>



Primetech's EasyTrac mats help Derian House hospice save £5000

Primetech's EasyTrac mobility mats, which can provide improved wet weather and damp ground access for vehicles of all sizes, have been used recently to help a charity maximise its fund raising efforts by avoiding losing a bond deposit for a major charity event.

Derian House, a hospice for children and young people based in Chorley, Lancashire was able to protect its ground damages bond of £5000 by ensuring it accrued no financial penalties at a major charity fundraising event held in November.

The Winter Sparkle Spectacular, held at Astley Park, Chorley is a regular and important source of income for the charity, which requires almost £4million per year to fund its valuable work supporting children and families at times of great stress. A large number of vehicles, some quite large, were required to support the event. These included a mini fairground (Helter Skelter, Carousel, Bungee trampoline, Snow-globe) plus a variety of catering trailers.

The local council required a bond of £5,000 to cover any damage done by these vehicles moving onto and parking on grass. Derian House approached Primetech to see if they could help with the new EasyTrac range of protective matting, launched at the Emergency Services Show in September this year.

Henry Walker of Primetech was delighted to help, and several sets of mats were delivered and set up by a Primetech team to help vehicles move into position without damaging grassed areas within the park.

Weighing just 5kg per mat, the 600 mm wide, 70mm thick Extra Strong mats can easily carry loads of up to 16 tonnes and were very well suited to preventing large vehicles from damaging the lawns. After a post-event inspection there was judged to be no damage to the grassed areas and the charity received its £5,000 bond back in full, a significant amount when the event raises around £20,000

Judy Miller, Community and Events Fundraiser for Derian House hospice said: "Our Winter Sparkle Spectacular is our annual Traditional Christmas Market event which attracts 1,000's of people from all over the county. It was an essential new requirement by Astley Park, Chorley Council to protect their grounds by placing a monetary bond to help with their sustainability and to mitigate any damages caused from heavy vehicles on the day.

"Thanks to discovering and then speaking with Henry Walker from Primetech, we were able to source a product that gave strong



Using Primetech's EasyTrac mobility mats for various event catering and support vehicles, Derian House, a hospice for children and young people based in Chorley, Lancashire, was able to prevent lawn damage and protect its ground damages bond of £5,000, thereby ensuring it accrued no financial penalties.

protection to the grounds at Astley Park and therefore no damage was incurred and the bond was returned in full. We were more than happy with the service and outcome of this product and have no hesitation in highly recommending Primetech as a company who went above and beyond our requirements."

inclusion of the Lightweight Cobra unit. The flexibility of these smaller vehicles and storage systems enables them to be easily modified to become Community Response Vehicles, giving greater support to the increasing partnership working being undertaken by many fire, police and ambulance services, a trend which is only set to grow.

Community Response Vehicles can be fitted with medical equipment, for example, to enable crews that arrive at an incident before an ambulance to begin administering medical assistance. The vehicles can also be adapted for use in other areas that many services are moving into, such as 'trips, slips and falls' callouts, medical

and first responder situations, terrorism, and emergency responses linked to climate change-related incidents. Today our emergency services find themselves stretched with budget cuts and fewer personnel, but they are still required to attend more (and more varied types) of incidents than fires and road traffic incidents, and society, government and the media still have high expectations of the levels of service that can be expected from them. Smaller, high capability vehicles can help deliver the service levels expected, giving on-going protection to the communities served by their fire and rescue services. www.primetech.co.uk

"Rapid response vehicles can enable faster response times to incidents"