



MSA Gas Mask First to be Approved for Protection Against Chemical/Biological Agents

Mar 12,2004

PITTSBURGH, Pa., March 12 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- A new gas mask developed by global safety equipment manufacturer MSA (AMEX: MSA) today earned the distinction of being first device of its kind to meet new government standards covering protection from chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) agents. MSA's Millennium(R) CBRN Gas Mask is the first full- facepiece air-purifying respirator (APR) to be certified by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) for CBRN protection. This gas mask provides first responders with effective respiratory protection against CBRN agents that might be used in a terrorist attack.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20040312/CLF048>)

The CBRN standard for full-facepiece gas masks was issued by NIOSH on March 7, 2003. In conjunction with military testing labs, NIOSH tests and approves devices as "CBRN-compliant" according to stringent test protocols for:

- Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents.
- Mask penetration and permeation.
- Carry and transportation durability.
- Use performance.
- Quality assurance.

"MSA understands how critical CBRN protection is to first responders," said Ron Herring, Jr., vice president and general manager of MSA's Safety Products Division. "To be at the forefront of developing a respiratory protection device that protects first responders from many of today's modern threats is a goal we've shared with NIOSH since the idea for a CBRN standard first came about in 1999. This is a significant day for MSA. But it is more significant to our customers who have been waiting to have access to this level of protection since the events of 9/11. Naturally, we are pleased to be the first manufacturer to have met this challenge."

The Millennium Gas Mask from MSA incorporates a flexible one-piece polyurethane lens with wide field of vision bonded to a durable Hycar rubber facepiece. A drinking tube provides connection for hydration. The Millennium dual-canister mount, used to attach the mask's air-purifying cartridge, allows for weapon sighting from either shoulder. With a fully elastic six-point head harness, the mask is easy to don, adjust, and remove. Additionally, lens fogging is prevented by an internal nosecup, which deflects exhaled air from the lens. A standard mechanical speaking diaphragm is included, or MSA's ESP II(R) Communications System may be added as an optional accessory.

Established in 1914, MSA is the world's leading provider of quality products and services that protect people's health and safety and the environment. The company has annual sales of nearly \$700 million, manufacturing operations throughout the United States and Europe and 28 international affiliates.

SOURCE Mine Safety Appliances Company