



serco



Introduction to Serco

Serco Group plc is an international provider of services to Governments, offering, amongst many other things, services in defence. These can be significantly complex & high hazard, due to significant chemical risks. For Serco, compromise is not an option; compliance is essential to protect from these dangers. When the turbulent market conditions and supply issues caused by Covid threatened a halt in working, Serco turned to Anchor to provide the stability and solutions they needed.



A business compromised by market instability

In the maintenance services provided by Serco, several of the chemicals used constitute a substantial hazard and have significant restrictions under HSE COSHH (Control of substances hazardous to health) guidance. Additionally, restrictions are in place under REACH, (registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals) whereby businesses must identify and manage the risks presented by substances and be able to consistently demonstrate safe use of the substance and communication of the risk management measures to users. In other words, for work to continue, **a break in PPE supply was not an option.**

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Serco Group plc

The hazardous substances in question were both complex wet chemicals and dusts arising from dry abrading, all inviting the necessity for regular replacement of PPE, including:

- ✔ Dichloromethane - contained in paint remover
- ✔ Chromate - contained in primers and wet pre-treatment liquids
- ✔ Chromate dust - generated in sanding and blasting tasks
- ✔ Benzyl alcohol - contained in paint remover, used in large quantities for full aircraft paint removal
- ✔ Acetone and other high volatility de-greasing and paint solvents
- ✔ Isocyanate containing polyurethane paint materials, spray applied in large quantities



Long term health risks

Dangers to health from these are significant, including narcotic effects (headache, dizziness or even unconsciousness), mucous membrane damage in the respiratory system, leading to ulcers, perforations, and irritation to the lungs potentially resulting in long term occupational asthma.

Market conditions threaten business

Unfortunately, the Covid environment had led to extremely turbulent market conditions. Existing supply chain and OEM PPE providers that had long-standing relationships with Serco failed to deliver required PPE provision, leading to a serious risk of a work stop. At the same time Serco were suffering from a fluctuating demand. Defence maintenance activities were classified as key worker tasks yet could have been seriously compromised by this instability.

Future-proofing and resilience

A solution with the business at its heart.

In a limited timeframe, Anchor Safety were able to provision a PPE solution which took into account all of the business needs and restraints of the market:

- ✔ Overcoming the inabilities of existing providers
- ✔ Ensuring all solutions were designed to be future proof, with demonstrable resilience in key PPE provision risk areas
- ✔ Demonstrating a search for efficiency, improved safety and better value



The Anchor Safety experience offered included everything that Serco needed to achieve consistency of compliance:

- ✔ Strategic planning ability
- ✔ Independent advice
- ✔ A strong, sustainable, and adaptable supply chain and logistics, with a clear understanding of product lifecycle management
- ✔ An ability to understand and advise on extremely technical needs, including risk control and decontamination advice
- ✔ Dedicated account management.
- ✔ A solutions-oriented approach— enabling collaborations with partner OEMs to create new, more effective solutions for the future
- ✔ An uncompromising attitude to safety while still being proactive on efficiency

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Whilst the impact of the pandemic created a serious PPE provision issue for the Surface Finish Contract, the silver lining was the intervention provided by Anchor Safety. Their engagement was straight forward, no-nonsense and facilitated in a professional, friendly manner, underpinned with their technical expertise and diverse supply chain solutions. Actions speak louder than words, and all promises were delivered and continue to be sustained, long after the period of Covid related difficulties. A firm level of trust has been established and the continuing innovation directly with Anchor, and OEM partners is effective on many levels and continues to add value to our bespoke and demanding task activities.

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Geoff Green, SHEQ Manager, Serco

To discuss the provision of strategic PPE solutions for your business, contact the Anchor Safety specialist team on: 0800 328 5028.