

A man and a woman are standing in an industrial facility, wearing high-visibility yellow and navy blue ProGARM workwear. The woman is on the left, and the man is on the right. They are both looking towards the camera. The background shows industrial equipment, including large storage tanks and pipes, with a yellow safety railing in the foreground. A large yellow diagonal graphic element is on the right side of the image.

ProGARM[®]
PROTECTING LIVES

VODAFONE

CASE STUDY

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KEY SUMMARY

Customer name: Vodafone

Location: UK, Nationwide

Business sector: Telecoms

Year of order: 2023

Business requirements: Ensure employees are offered the best possible protection when working in the field.

AN OVERVIEW

As part of an update to Vodafone's Health and Safety strategy, the company undertook a full review of its personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure it was offering its employees the best possible protection when working in the field. The ambition was to have a single supplier who could provide every level of protective-wear, including flame and arc flash-resistant items. For Vodafone, this review coincided with a newly mandated requirement on one of their client sites to ensure arc flash protective clothing is being used, which acted as a further catalyst for change.

“Working with ProGARM has been simple and easy; not something you can always say about the procurement process.”



ASSESSING THE MARKET

Vodafone has a mobile team of field-based engineers who are trained to work in a range of high-risk environments. From power sub-stations to overhead pylon sites, large data centres to small remote properties, their engineers are routinely exposed to fire and arc flash risks. Working with their incumbent PPE supplier, Vodafone Health and Safety Governance Manager Gus Birks began to explore the potential specification needed for its specialist-protection PPE requirements. Their supplier felt that more technical expertise would help support the conversation and recommended the introduction of ProGARM as a potential partner that they could work with on Vodafone's behalf.

Following an introductory call to understand objectives and potential requirements, Vodafone was able to access the extensive technical and specialist expertise of ProGARM's team directly, helping them work through potential solutions that would meet the safety needs of their wide and varied client base.

“ProGARM have delivered on four essential areas for us: high quality garments that are enjoyable to wear, technical qualities that allow us to meet the necessary safety standards, protective performance that will keep our field engineers safe, and a service relationship that means we feel supported and educated to make the right choices.”

DRIVING A HIGHER STANDARD

Due to the diversity in locations and the ever-changing risks in their roles, ProGARM worked with Vodafone to assess the risks in each environment. Collaboratively the teams went through the technical specifications to select the garments that provided the level of protection for every use-case. It was important for Vodafone to have PPE that not only performed to the required category 1 and category 2 technical standards, but that would also be comfortable, lightweight and durable for their workforce. The solution offered by ProGARM ensured that Vodafone could meet the long-standing needs of both their clients and employees in a commercially viable way.

Vodafone found the process both educational and insightful which grew their own level of understanding of the standards and certifications that surround these specialist products.



THE PILOT PHASE

With their client's mandatory requirements for specialist PPE in mind as well their own health and safety strategy, Vodafone selected a complete uniform of trousers, polo shirt, jacket and coverall and set about a two-week pilot with a small number of engineers.

The feedback was resolutely positive. Every item was found to be comfortable and wearable with a reassuringly high quality and excellent fit. The pilot users felt they were being invested in, which supports Vodafone's commitment to employee welfare and its health and safety-first culture.

BUILDING THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE

Working with their primary supplier, Vodafone is now in the process of rolling out ProGARM kit to more than 100 field engineers who work in high-risk locations throughout the UK.

They now have ProGARM products readily accessible on their internal purchasing portal with the commercial relationship handled by their single PPE provider. Despite this, Vodafone has full and direct access to the ProGARM team to discuss new client requirements, technical specifications or new product lines.

Gus says, "Working with ProGARM has been simple and easy; not something you can always say about the procurement process. They've delivered on four essential areas for us: high quality garments that are enjoyable to wear, technical qualities that allow us to meet the necessary safety standards, protective performance that will keep our field engineers safe, and a service relationship that means we feel supported and educated to make the right choices. It's a significant commercial investment but in the long-term, it's the right decision for our workforce, our clients and our health and safety culture."

As a result of the successful partnership with ProGARM, their products are now being recommended for wider rollout across the Vodafone business portfolio. This includes business units across Europe, as ProGARM garments have been designed to ensure compliance with all necessary EU regulations. This means Vodafone engineers in multiple countries can have access maximum protection and highly wearable PPE when working in high-risk fire and arc flash locations.

