

RISE TO THE CHALLENGE: OUTDRY AND SIXTON

A new protective Sixton boot for workers exposed to extreme conditions combines waterproof breathable membrane technology from OutDry with a popular choice of lining, wool.

Design flexibility gets PPE award

Waterproof breathable technology brand OutDry has won recognition from research and testing organisation SATRA for its work with a specialist Italian footwear brand, Sixton. Padua-based Maspica, the company behind the Sixton brand, specialises in safety boots for the higher end of the personal protective equipment (PPE) market.

SATRA has set up an awards programme specifically for PPE products and at a ceremony in April in the UK city of Coventry, it awarded the prize for 'Best Contribution to PPE Production Efficiency' to OutDry for use of its one-step direct lamination process in a Sixton boot, the Empire, which Maspica recommends for use in severe climate conditions.

Cold in the extreme

An awards jury examined a sample of the Empire OutDry protective boot. Key features include a full grain leather upper directly laminated with OutDry waterproof breathable membrane, and a lining containing merino wool. This combination provides protection from extreme wet and cold weather and also offers a

Workers exposed to harsh temperatures for long periods of time will welcome the wool lining with OutDry's waterproof breathable membrane.

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high level of comfort. The boot meets S3-CI-WR-HRO-SRC standards according to the EN ISO 20345 norm.

A jury statement said OutDry, developed in Italy but acquired by Columbia Sportswear in 2010, was “a waterproofing technology that permits design freedom and flexibility in production”. As a result of this flexibility, it pointed out that Sixton had been able to use wool rather than material from non-renewable resources in the lining of the Empire boot.

Wool breaks new ground

Matteo Morlacchi, one of the founders and general manager of OutDry Technologies, said on accepting the award: “We are extremely proud of the award we received as we recognise SATRA as the world’s leading authority in footwear technology research and testing. And we are really pleased about the motivation as this is really the first ‘WR’ [water resistant] marked PPE boot in the market with a wool lining.”

Mr Morlacchi went on to say that all other water-resistant safety shoes available in the market at the moment include a seam-taped bootie made from a waterproof breathable membrane layered to the lining material. Because of the bootie construction technique, he



OutDry's direct lamination technique makes it possible for PPE footwear manufacturers to have a wider choice of lining.

 OutDry/Sixton

explained that it is impossible to use thick materials such as wool for the lining layer.

In contrast, OutDry's technique involving direct lamination of the waterproof and breathable membrane onto the inner side of the upper of a boot or shoe leaves designers free to



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pick from a wider range of lining materials. In the Sixton Empire OutDry, the footwear brand has chosen merino wool as the most effective lining solution for the specific use the wearer will subject the boot to, and for the environmental and sustainability benefits associated with wool in comparison to most synthetic fibres.

Long exposure

Ruggero Carraro, Maspica’s research and development manager, believes the Empire exemplifies well the type of footwear the company is seeking to produce. It’s a relatively small manufacturer and prefers to focus on producing high-quality rather than high-volume PPE products. Another aspect it wants to focus on, within the PPE sector, is on providing footwear for workers whose jobs oblige them to spend lengthy periods of time in severe wet or cold conditions. Examples of targeted users are forestry workers, those who maintain cable cars at ski resorts and people working on offshore oil platforms in the North Sea. Maspica is confident a wool lining combined with the OutDry waterproof system offers a high level of protection from wet and cold while providing consistent wearer comfort.

Wool helps keep the wearer’s feet warm while preventing moisture build-up and bad odour.

This last point can be of great importance in many work environments. Space is limited, both in luggage and in accommodation, and people are often unable to take more than one pair of work footwear on the job. Even at a retail price of €110 per pair, the Empire is already popular with a growing number of users in northern Europe. Recognition from SATRA is likely to boost its popularity further.



Stylish, comfortable and secure against the elements, the Sixton Empire OutDry boot.

Sixton

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