

GENEDGE PROVIDES PROTOTYPE SUPPORT THROUGH PHASE 2 OF GO VIRGINIA RETOOLING PROGRAM FOR PHOENIX GROUP OF VIRGINIA

ABOUT PHOENIX GROUP OF VIRGINIA INC. Established in 2008, Phoenix Group of Virginia, Inc. is a veteran-owned small business (VOSB), with headquarters in Chesapeake, Virginia. Phoenix Group provides expert services and quality products to the U.S. government, including the Department of Homeland Security, NATO, and commercial industry, as well as industrial markets.

THE CHALLENGE. Chem/bio protective clothing was Phoenix Group of Virginia's main product line during the early 2000s, which was a one-piece suit certified by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). In 2012, however, Phoenix Group of Virginia found themselves in a quandary when their NFPA certified one piece chem/bio protective suit's material was no longer certifiable under the new NFPA guidelines and requirements. For that suit, the main concern was a breathable type of fabric. Due to the concern that manufacturing the new material would outweigh the return on investment gains, the company looked for a more viable alternative.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. A company in Pennsylvania presented a solution with a two-piece chemical/biological suit made of breathable fabric. Phoenix Group soon became the company's exclusive marketing and manufacturing partner for the two-piece suit. In the end, though, this new suit didn't meet NFPA certification, either, because a two-piece suit could not successfully pass portions of the NFPA testing certification. Redesigning the suit, along with testing to meet the updated NFPA standard, would be a costly undertaking, especially for a small company. That's when Phoenix Group applied to GENEDGE's Go Virginia Retooling Program and was accepted to the program. This two-year program, supported by GO Virginia Region One, was funded in part by GO Virginia with matching funds provided by GENEDGE, part of the MEP National Network™, to develop manufacturing capacity to re-shore production for critical industries. (GO Virginia is an initiative by Virginia's senior business leaders to foster private-sector growth and job creation through state incentives for regional collaboration by business, education, and government.) As part of the program, Phoenix Group worked with another GENEDGE client, Capewell Industries, who also manufactured two-piece chem/bio suits. As a result of the Go Virginia Retooling Program, Phoenix Group designed a prototype, which is currently being tested to comply with the current NFPA regulations. Currently, local first responders, U.S. military, as well as two international clients, are interested in the garment.

"Without programs like the GENEDGE's Go Virginia Retooling Program, it's difficult for a small business to invest in developing innovative products. Phoenix Group of Virginia has always been a leader in Innovative First Responder products. We strive to provide Innovative products for those that help protect our community."

-Stephen Clock, National Sales Director, Phoenix Group of Virginia

RESULTS



2-3 potential client contracts for the garment including DOD



1 new prototype

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