

Safeaid: 45 years of keeping workforces safe

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*Richard Bowen, Managing Director of **Safeaid**, discusses the journey so far for the specialist supplier of PPE and safety workwear to the rail industry.*

It is 45 years ago this year that Safeaid first opened for business. The leading specialist supplier of PPE and safety workwear was initially set up by current Chairman Roger Bowen to provide first aid products to customers in the south of England.

Fast forward to the present, and the business has more than four decades of health and safety expertise and – with a focus on quality and compliance – has built a reputation, product range and service that customers can rely on.

“Everyone should return home safely from work and an important part of that is making sure all workers have the correct equipment,” said Managing Director Richard Bowen, son of the Founder and current Chairman Roger.

“Trust and confidence should be pre-requisites when choosing your PPE supplier. You need to be certain that your workforce is not at risk of injury from non-compliant PPE and the reputation of your company is not at risk of damage as a result.”

“With so much at stake, procurement decisions must be taken wisely and based on factors other than price alone. As a company we pride ourselves on providing safety critical equipment and PPE that is 100% fit for purpose and we hold multiple, universally recognised quality performance certificates.”

The company expanded its offering in the 1970s as the Health and Safety at Work Act started to have an impact. Then, as the requirements for health and safety in the workplace increased, the team could see that to become a trusted partner, rather than just a supplier, would make good sense to all concerned.

“To achieve this, we needed to truly understand our customers, so the decision was taken to focus our activities on specific markets and become absolute specialists,” said Richard, who during his 25 years at Safeaid has worked in every area of the business.

“This has enabled us to offer enhanced levels of service through our knowledge and expertise around products and industry safety standards.

“Initially, we focussed on the infrastructure markets, with the vision to become a fully integrated, indispensable part of our clients’ workflow through technological innovation and world-class customer service.”

“It was just over 15 years ago that we identified the rail industry as a key market for us, fuelled by a genuine passion for all things rail and the belief that our knowledge and expertise could make a positive difference – particularly to the rail PPE product range. It was shortly after this, through working alongside track workers and health and safety professionals, that we introduced Signal, our own specialist rail brand of fully compliant workwear and PPE.

“We are also the originators of QuickBand, the armband identification system which has changed the way the rail market uses armbands, replacing the outdated metal and acrylic alternatives. These initiatives underpin our commitment to innovations in rail.

“The vision continues to drive us, with total commitment to serve those who rely on us every day to protect their most precious asset – our people.”



The key to the company's success is continually investing in developing and improving its product and service offerings, in line with customer requirements and the latest regulations.

These currently include Signal, its flagship brand clothing range; Fast-Track, which gives customers next day delivery for branded PPE, and Mi365, a market-leading PPE management platform, providing a simple and effective solution to ordering, managing and controlling PPE.

"We know that allocating and managing PPE can be a real headache, so we developed Mi365 to give customers a stress-free and time saving automated system, which they can access free of charge.

"As well as making the process of ordering easier, it has been proven to save customers up to 20 per cent on their annual PPE spend as it has the ability to set budgets and purchasing limits.

"It also offers many compliance benefits as it has full reporting capabilities and PPE can be tracked, traced and signatures captured.

Richard concluded: "Experience isn't gained overnight and health and safety is a complex and frequently changing business. We pride ourselves on manufacturing and supplying quality, compliant PPE and delivering a responsive and reliable service which our customers can have confidence in.

"We work with major contractors and sub-contractors on leading projects throughout the UK, day in and

day out. We understand the implications of missing a possession window and we know that PPE has to work just as hard as those who wear it.”

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