

# FIRE REPORT

## – the powder grenade

The DSPA-5 fire knockdown tool (Dry Sprinkler Powder Aerosol technology) has been deployed for the first time in the UK - and this innovative firefighting technology improves the speed of fire knockdown at incidents and buys firefighters time.

On 2nd December 2009 Rob Barber, Assistant Area Commander of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, received a call to a block of flats in the Chesterton area of Newcastle-under-Lyme. "On arrival we faced a first floor fire with smoke issuing from the boarded up windows," explained Barber. "The local residents had informed us that there was no-one living in the apartment. I decided to deploy the DSPA-5."

Firefighter Gordon picks up the story, "Following our briefing and equipped with breathing apparatus, a hose reel and the DSPA, we proceeded to the source of the fire.

Once the source of origin was located it was clear that the temperature in the compartment was very intense. Firefighter Jones activated the DSPA by releasing the pin and sliding it across the floor into the compartment.

We then withdrew from the compartment and within seconds we could hear the DSPA activating. It was immediately clear the effect the device was having as the colour of the smoke changed from thick black to white. After around 5 minutes we re-committed to the compartment with a hose reel to find the temperature had reduced quite considerably and the fire itself was all but extinguished. It only took a small amount of water from the hose reel to completely extinguish the fire overall."

Barber was very impressed with the speed of improvement in conditions within the compartment. "The absolute priority at all times is the safety and well-being of the crew. The DSPA rapidly reduced the temperature and attacked the fire without the need for the crew to remain inside the compartment."

John Maxfield, director of DSPA.uk Ltd, is pleased that the DSPA-5 knockdown tool has now been used in action in the UK. "It is used extensively in the United States, Canada, Eastern Europe and the Far East and now we have seen at first hand how effective it is as part of a firefighter's armoury."

Referring to the incident in Staffordshire, Maxfield considers the minimal amount of water usage as an important point. "The fire was on the first floor and if the firefighters had applied only water to the scene then there could have been considerable water damage to the floors below. In cases where the water is in short supply, deploying DSPA means that the water is used sparingly and efficiently."

Maxfield also points out that the DSPA active material is non-

toxic. "DSPA is composed of various potassium compounds which are harmless to humans and animals. If there had been a casualty in the flat in Staffordshire the DSPA could still have been deployed. Everyone issued with a DSPA-5 receives thorough training in where and when the device should be used and how to prepare for its deployment."

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DRY SPRINKLER POWDER AEROSOL

Dry Sprinkler Powder Aerosol (DSPA) is a revolutionary fire suppression technology that:

- Prevents backdrafts and flashovers
- Reduces the room temperature
- Maintains oxygen levels
- Requires less water
- Is harmless to humans and animals
- Does not leave any harmful residues
- Is environmentally friendly
- Speeds up arson detection



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