

ITEM #:	21
DATE:	08-12-25
DEPT:	FIRE

## COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT:**                      **CONTRACT FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT TURNOUT GEAR**

**BACKGROUND:**

Standardizing turnout gear within the Fire Department enhances firefighter safety, operational efficiency, and long-term cost effectiveness. Consistent gear ensures equal protection, simplifies training and maintenance, and enables more accurate tracking of gear lifespan. For approximately 20 years, the department has used Globe turnout gear.

Recognizing advancements in gear design and materials, staff recently determined that a reevaluation of the approach to purchasing turnout gear was necessary. **The evaluation process focused on both the composite system (the fabrics that make up the gear) and the new features offered by various manufacturers.** The goal was to ensure firefighters are equipped with high-quality, cost-effective gear that balances safety, functionality, and comfort.

Staff in the Fire Department conducted a wear trial to gather real-world feedback on fit, mobility, durability, and comfort of various manufacturers' product lines. Turnout gear from four manufacturers was included in the initial wear trial, with the option to evaluate turnout gear from additional manufacturers if proposals were received from vendors not previously identified. The following manufacturers' turnout gear was included in the wear trial:

- Globe
- Lion Technology
- Innotex
- Lakeland

The wear trial provided the opportunity for staff to gain familiarity with each manufacturer's products on the basis of:

- Composite system options (outer shell, moisture barrier, thermal barrier)
- Total Heat Loss (THL) and Thermal Protective Performance (TPP)
- Comfort, mobility, weight, and bulk
- Customization options
- Vendor responsiveness and customer service
- Warranty coverage and overall quality

Staff utilized the information from the wear trial to develop the desired criteria for a Request for Proposals (RFP). On May 20, 2025, an RFP was issued for a contract for the purchase of firefighter turnout gear. Proposals were due on June 10, 2025. A total of five vendors submitted proposals. An evaluation committee composed of Fire Department staff reviewed the proposals based on several criteria: suitability for Fire Department needs, quality and durability, vendor service capability, and cost. The following table summarizes the overall rankings and cost proposals:

Rank	Company	Turnout Gear Cost per Set
1	Dinges Fire Company (Amboy, IL)	\$4,175.00
2	MacQueen Equipment Group (Saint Paul, MN)	\$3,952.33
3	Conway Shield (New Berlin, WI)	\$3,650.00
4	Feld Fire Equipment (Carroll, IA)	\$3,490.00
5	Crewboss PPE (Eugene, OR)	<i>Did not submit costs with proposal</i>

The proposal from Crewboss PPE did not contain pricing, delivery timelines, and warranty information, and did not meet the minimum number of composite system options, and was therefore deemed non-responsive. **After review, it was determined that the Lion V-Force turnout gear proposed by Dinges Fire Company best met the department's operational and safety needs.** The selected composite system is as follows:

- **Outer Shell:** Armor AP
- **Moisture Barrier:** Glide Ice Nano
- **Thermal Barrier:** Crosstech Black

*This combination provides a THL rating of 292.5 and a TPP rating of 40, offering excellent breathability and heat protection.*

**Dinges received the highest overall evaluation score in large part due to high scores for quality and durability, fast turnaround times for new gear and repairs managed by Dinges directly rather than a third party, and full coverage of all freight and handling costs, including those associated with both warranty and non-warranty repairs.**

The initial contract term would be from August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2026 with the option to renew the contract for four additional 12-month terms. The Fire Department estimates it will purchase 17 sets of turnout gear in the initial year of the contract, with additional gear sets purchased in future years as needed to replace worn gear and equip new personnel.

**The total Year 1 cost with Dinges Fire Company, providing Lion Technology turnout gear, is \$70,975. This amount includes all equipment costs as well as freight and handling charges.** Funding for this purchase is available in the amount of \$80,281.47, of which \$9,306.47 is from the FY 2025/26 Fire Safety Clothing/Gear Budget, and \$70,975 is in Fire Department funds being carried over from FY 2024/25.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the award of a contract with Dinges Fire Company, Amboy, IL, for firefighter turnout gear in the amount of \$70,975.
2. Direct staff to award a contract for firefighter turnout gear to one of the other companies that submitted a proposal.
3. Do not award a contract for firefighter turnout gear.

**CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**Fire Department staff recommends approval to purchase Lion V-Force turnout gear from Dinges Fire Company based on a comprehensive evaluation process, including field wear trials and a formal request for proposal process.** Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative No. 1, as described above.