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SmartDock Gen2

Pros

- + No belts; and
- + Easy to retrofit in apparatus.

Cons

- Cost (MSRP: \$725).

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In 'n Out

LifeGuard Technologies' SmartDock Gen2 simplifies SCBA release from the apparatus seat

By Scott Cook

Whether you pull a strap or push a handle to release your SCBA, most of us hate how SCBAs are secured in the apparatus—or at least we hated how SCBAs were secured in the apparatus until LifeGuard Technologies' SmartDock Gen2 hit the streets. Finally, no more hassling with the SCBA's seatbelt.

A few years ago, I was fortunate enough to be asked to test the original SmartDock. I loved the concept, but it needed some tweaks. The guys at the station and I put our heads together, sent our thoughts to the company and earlier this year, I got an e-mail from one of my editors that said, "They got it. Do you want to test it?"

And got it they did. LifeGuard Technologies—the folks who make RollTek apparatus side-roll protection, 4Front apparatus airbag systems, the DataTrak on-board data recorder and the SafeGuard pediatric transport—continues its innovative ways with an SCBA holder that's belt-free.

The SmartDock Gen2 is over and above what we anticipated for the next generation SmartDock. First and foremost, no more belting in the SCBA. Instead, the SCBA sits in a cradle and is securely supported at the top and bottom to keep it from falling out. The easily adjustable SmartDock secures just about any SCBA out there. Looking at it, it's hard to see how it wouldn't fit every



PHOTO COURTESY LIFE GUARD TECHNOLOGIES

Installation of the SmartDock Gen2 was simple and only took about 10 minutes.

SCBA. Unfortunately, it doesn't, though. The 45-minute MSA Vulcan and the 45-minute Scott "Stubby" don't fit in the SmartDock, nor does any aluminum 2,216-psi cylinder.

We tested the SmartDock from installation to donning and replacement of the SCBA. The installation was simple: We replaced the existing officer's seat SCBA bracket with the SmartDock. The entire process took about 10 minutes. Something else you don't see every day: clear instructions on its installation, adjustment and use.

We put the SCBA back in the bracket and turned the claw adjustment until the jaws met the top of the cylinder. We then hit the road to see how well it held driving down the street. The very first thing we noticed was that the SCBA in the SmartDock was the only one in the apparatus not loose and rattling. We tested it to ensure it wouldn't fall out on hard braking—it didn't. For obvious reasons, we didn't crash test it, but the manufacturer states that the "SmartDock has been tested at the Center for Advanced Product Evaluation (CAPE) to exceed NFPA 1901: Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus. When evaluated to NFPA 1901, SmartDock Gen2 met requirements for retaining both the cylinder and the pack in dynamic testing."

Getting out of the SmartDock seat with an SCBA is

The SCBA holder sits in a cradle and is securely supported at the top and bottom to keep it from falling out.



PHOTO COURTESY SCOTT COOK

as easy as getting out of any other seat: Lean forward and stand up. No pull-straps, no levers and the only seatbelt involved is the one *you* wear. So long as the vehicle isn't in a hard deceleration, the SmartDock will release the SCBA. For the cabinet-mounted engineer's SCBA, the SmartDock will release the SCBA with an easy pull of the shoulder straps. Sitting back down with the SCBA can be done, but it's a bit of a challenge. Instead, doff the SCBA before putting it back in the SmartDock.

The bottom line: This product is great and it's essentially firefighter-proof—you put the SCBA in, and it stays put until you pull it out.

Scott Cook is the former chief of the Granbury (Texas) Volunteer Fire Department and a fire service instructor. He's also a member of *FireRescue's* editorial board.

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Tapped for USFA

Obama nominates Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran to head USFA

On July 6, the White House released the names of individuals President Obama intends to nominate to key administrative positions. Among them is Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran as the head of the U.S. Fire Administration. Cochran, a *FireRescue* magazine editorial board member, has written numerous articles for the magazine, including his most recent, "Still Standing: Striving & thriving as a leader during tough times" (April, p. 82).



"I am honored and humbled to have been nominated to serve the administration of President Barak Obama and the American people through the U.S. Fire Administration," Cochran said in a statement on the City of Atlanta Web site. "I look forward to working with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano and FEMA Director Craig Fugate to enhance America's fire service role in preparedness and response, and protecting life and property."

Chief Cochran has decades of experience in preventing and responding to fires and emergencies. Specifically, he had 28 years of experience, from firefighter to assistant chief training officer to fire chief of Shreveport, La., before becoming fire chief of Atlanta, last year. He has also served as the first vice president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, president of the Metropolitan Fire

Chiefs Association, and vice chairman of Volunteers of America.

"It is remarkable to think that my childhood dream of being a firefighter has taken me from the front porch of a shotgun house in Shreveport, La., to becoming the head of the U.S. Fire Administration," Cochran added.

As U.S. Fire Administrator, Cochran is charged with overseeing, coordinating and directing national efforts to prevent fires and improve fire response. Cochran will oversee fire prevention and safety education programs and professional development opportunities for emergency responders at all levels of government.

DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano noted that "Kelvin will play a vital role in strengthening our fire prevention and emergency management capabilities across the country. Working closely with our state and local partners, Kelvin will lead our nationwide efforts to prepare for and respond to fire emergencies."

FireRescue magazine congratulates Chief Cochran on this honor.

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In Memoriam

Plans underway for a Charleston 9 memorial site

By Jane Jerrard

On June 18, 2007, in the greatest single loss of firefighters in the United States since Sept. 11, nine firefighters perished in the Sofa Super Store fire in Charleston, S.C. The city immediately purchased the site of the store, and now a conceptual plan has been approved for a memorial and park on the property.



The preliminary plan for the memorial site includes a two-story building that wraps around a memorial park area.

PHOTO COURTESY CFD