

Written evidence submitted by The Department for Health and Social Care

About DHSC

The Department for Health and Social Care is a ministerial department, supported by 15 arm's length bodies and a number of other agencies and public bodies. Our work includes leading global health and international relations, keeping people healthy and independent in their communities, supporting the transformation of NHS primary, community and mental health services and local authority public health and social care, supporting the NHS, supporting research and innovation to maximise health and improving health and social care by giving people the technology they need.

Why are we submitting?

This is a factual account of PPE contracts which the Department for Health and Social Care awarded to the four suppliers giving evidence to the Public Accounts Committee.

We understand that on the 24th May the Committee will hear from four PPE suppliers, all of whom came forward and offered assistance to provide PPE during the first wave of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The four suppliers were awarded sizeable contracts for the supply of PPE worth a combined total of £2.3bn:

- Full Support Healthcare was awarded contracts to the value of £1.84 billion
- Uniserve was awarded contracts to the value of £303 million
- Bunzl was awarded contracts to the value of £144 million
- ARCO was awarded contracts to the value £14 million

In addition, Uniserve was awarded a contract of £0.71 billion for freight and logistics. They have also supported NHS Test and Trace and the vaccine deployment. Prior to the pandemic Uniserve were a supplier to the NHS through SCCL.

The combined value of these contracts amounts to over 20% of the Department's total spend on PPE, with Full Support Healthcare receiving the largest overall value contracts of any supplier.

It is inappropriate for the Department to comment further on the detail of its contractual interactions with any individual supplier.

All the Department awarded contracts are published and can be found on Contracts Finders:

- Arco Disposable Face Splash Guard (£9.3m) – <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/bec1b3f7-3179-4cad-8d13-8eb9657bbd39>
- Arco Alcohol Hand Gel (£1.5m) – <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/9b263d01-5bbd-4c4d-8158-4a3f2f47ade7>
- Arco Hand Sanitiser (£3.2m)- <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/33720e1c-0380-44ea-9b17-2be7dff9981a>
- Bunzl Safety Goggles (£22.5m) - [Supply of Personal Protective Equipment for Healthcare Workers for the Care of Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Novel Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) - Contracts Finder](#)
- Bunzl Garments (£20.8k)- <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/6d4a72f0-a7c5-4d69-8708-20fa0b477c2d>
- Uniserve Aprons (£14.4m) – [Supply of Personal Protective Equipment for Healthcare Workers for the Care of Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - Contracts Finder](#)
- Uniserve Face Shields (£103m) - <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/notice/d4ceb783-9c86-4c77-b233-5c1e899a78af?origin=SearchResults&p=1>
- Uniserve Aprons (£13.5m) – <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/f5026855-54ee-4103-906c-c0e58024824c>
- Uniserve Gowns (£86.2m) - <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/6476e129-aea3-413b-8bb7-682e00efef0c>
- Uniserve Type IIR (£69.6m) – <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/bc5b55d1-1b1f-4706-a9e9-507a1a1d867f>
- Uniserve Aprons (£10m) – <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/bc5b55d1-1b1f-4706-a9e9-507a1a1d867f>
- Uniserve Face Shields (£7.1m) – [Supply of Personal Protective Equipment for Healthcare Workers for the Care of Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - Contracts Finder](#)
- Full Support Healthcare - All contracts awarded through SCCL to a value of £1.84bn will be published by 28 May 2021.

The focus of the Department’s work throughout has been to get PPE to where it is needed. We have delivered over 11 billion items of PPE to protect our frontline workers, including 1.7 billion Type IIR face masks, 100 million FFP3 face masks, 48 million gowns and 6.9 billion gloves.

This vital supply helped keep the NHS open at a moment of national crisis and enabled them to deliver a service to the public. Globally there were significant logistical challenges in sourcing, procuring and distributing PPE. The rapid rise in international infection rates during the early stages of the pandemic created unparalleled demand for PPE.

We set up, from scratch, a new parallel supply chain to procure, manage and distribute life-saving PPE. During the pandemic we stood up significant UK manufacturing capacity as well as securing PPE from overseas via these companies

and others. The PPE programme was an enormous cross-government effort, drawing upon expertise from a number of Departments together with fantastic support from the military and private sector partners. Officials worked day and night to secure these contracts.

May 2021