

SHERIFF & DEPUTY

A Resource for Sheriffs, Deputies, and Other Public Safety Professionals
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IN THE ZONE

THE EMERGENCY SERVICES SECTOR IS PROMOTING
COMPREHENSIVE DISASTER-ZONE ACCESS
PLANNING THROUGH THE
CERRA PROGRAM



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SHERIFFS.ORG





LOOK FOR THE LABEL

Registered National Institute of Justice mark indicates compliance with body armor standards

By Becky Lewis

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Compliance Testing Program (CTP) independently evaluates criminal justice professional equipment for compliance with NIJ's minimum performance standards, then communicates compliance status through a compliant products list (CPL) published on www.justnet.org. As of March 31, 2017, NIJ requires ballistic-resistant body armor manufacturers who want their equipment to appear on the list to apply for, and receive, permission to use the NIJ Certification Mark. Manufacturers' use of the NIJ mark will improve criminal justice practitioners' ability to identify body armor that participates in the NIJ CTP.

As of April 2017, all new production armor produced that is listed on the CPL should have the NIJ mark on the label. Armors that complied with the 0101.06 standard produced prior to March 2017 may have either the NIJ mark or the NIJ Statement of Compliance (see next paragraph) on the label. Agencies shopping for body armor should check to see that the products under consideration appear on the CPL. Older models that were tested to a previous version of the standard may also still be available from some vendors; these armors are not listed on the CPL.

In the past, manufacturers were required to place a specifically worded statement of compliance on all products listed on the CPL. By creating the NIJ Mark, NIJ established rights that provide certain legal protections against misuse. The statement of compliance lacked these protections and was susceptible to manipulation. In the past, some manufacturers created statements very similar to the statement of compliance that implied participation in the NIJ CTP. Thus, some law enforcement agencies may have mistakenly purchased non-NIJ-compliant armor that did not participate in the program, according to NIJ CTP manager Alex Sundstrom, of the Justice Technology Innovation Center (JTIC).

"The NIJ mark indicates that the ballistic-resistant body armor model to which it has been applied has been determined by the NIJ to be compliant with the current version of the NIJ ballistic-resistant body armor standard and meets the requirements of the NIJ CTP," Sundstrom says. "By placing the NIJ mark on the armor, a manufacturer declares that the armor was both constructed in the same manner as the original test items evaluated by the NIJ CTP, and assembled under the NIJ CTP's surveillance program, which periodically inspects and tests production samples. Even with the

(Listed Company's) Name
(Listed Company's Address)

Model: _____



NIJ Standard-0101.06

Threat Level (NIJ 0101.06): _____

Size: _____

Serial Number: _____

Lot Number: _____

Location of Manufacturer: _____

Date of Manufacture: _____

Date of Issue: _____

Manufacturer's Ballistic Performance Warranty Period: _____

For Warranty Information Contact: _____

WARNING!

This garment is rated ONLY for the ballistic threat level stated above. It is NOT intended to protect against rifle fire or sharp-edged or pointed instruments.

WARNING!

**** Wear Face ****

This side to be worn against body.

Care Instructions for Ballistic Panel:
(Sample Instructions Shown):

1. Do not wash or dry clean.
2. Wipe with a damp cloth.

The NIJ mark.

addition of the mark, we still recommend that criminal justice agencies go to www.policearmor.org and verify the armor's status by checking the NIJ CPL."

The goal of the NIJ CTP is to provide criminal justice practitioners with confidence that the fielded products they use meet applicable requirements and perform as expected. In order to achieve this goal, the NIJ CTP must both independently evaluate products and communicate the results of those evaluations to practitioners.

When a manufacturer applies the NIJ mark to a specific product, the manufacturer is attesting that this specific product represents the same design and construction as that evaluated and tested by the NIJ CTP during initial evaluation and testing according to NIJ Standard 0101.06, and was constructed under the oversight of the follow-up inspection and testing (FIT) surveillance program. As part of a manufacturer's participation in the NIJ CTP, manufacturers must complete legal agreements and have production labels approved before they begin placing the NIJ mark on production units.

Proper labeling

In addition to the NIJ mark, an NIJ CTP-approved label should include a number of other elements, some of which are listed below; manufacturers receive a more detailed list that includes specifics on type size, label appearance, and so on. (See the sample label accompanying this article.)

- Name, logo or other identification of listed company (i.e., company name or brand under which a product is labeled, listed and sold)
- Model designation as it appears on the manufacturer's notice of compliance
- Applicable standard version
- Rated level of protection, referencing the standard
- Size (or name of individual if custom-fitted)
- Serial number
- Lot number
- Location and date of manufacture
- Date of issue (to be filled in by user)
- Length of ballistic warranty and point of contact for warranty information
- Declaration as to whether the armor provides ballistic protection, stab/slash protection, or both
- Clear identification of either strike face or body side
- Care instructions

For more information about the NIJ mark and the NIJ CTP, please visit www.policearmor.org. ★

Becky Lewis is senior writer at the Justice Technology Information Center (JTIC).

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