



Fit For Nuclear Q&A: Fairham Mouldings

John Fairhurst, director at Fairham Mouldings, explains how F4N helped the company become nuclear-ready.

Could you introduce your company?

Fairham Mouldings was founded in 2000 in Blackburn, Lancashire. We are experts in the design and manufacture of rubber components. We have a wealth of experience, from years of manufacturing precision rubber components for use in numerous industrial sectors. We have refined our process enabling us to provide products of the highest quality to very precise customer requirements.

Our parts are used in a variety of applications, including seals for hygienic couplings, pipe connectors, pharmaceutical products, transport items and specific ferrules for the nuclear industry. We can manufacture bespoke parts to suit customer requirements in a large range of elastomer materials.

To meet customer requirements, we have developed several elastomers, formulated using high-grade ingredients determined by the application or media contact, and carried out extraction and mechanical properties tests to ensure the many vigorous demands on the product are met.

Why did you enter the F4N programme?

We were looking to expand into new markets such as nuclear. We saw the programme as an ideal opportunity to understand the industry requirements and expectations, and for us to

learn how to become nuclear ready.

We wanted to work with the experts at the Nuclear AMRC to drive our business forward and to identify any gaps in our systems and processes.

We pride ourselves in our expertise, quality and experience in the rubber industry. This has recently gained us the high status of Fit For Nuclear – the first organisation in the rubber industry to achieve this.

What areas did the assessment identify for development?

There were no big surprises after our initial assessment. As a company, we knew that there would be some gaps in our processes and systems. The three principal areas that were identified as needing development were people, process excellence, and our health and safety processes.

The audit and company assessment were a very useful tool and gave us the verification of where we needed to concentrate our efforts.

How did you close the gaps in these areas?

After creating our initial action plan, we began to develop a companywide strategy. Training appeared to be key to developing and achieving our goals.



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We needed to improve our H&S processes, so one of our employees undertook the Neboosh national general certificate and became qualified. With this new knowledge, we were then able to devise and implement a more detailed and robust health and safety management system.

We are happy to say that all employees of the company have embraced our new safety culture. Health and safety is now paramount to us as a company, and we shall continue to assess and improve our system over time.

To improve our process excellence, we employed a consultant to train us in lean manufacturing techniques such as 5S, KPIs and process management. These have now been implemented across the company.

Two of our team leaders were placed on a NVQ team leading and management course, and have both qualified giving them invaluable skills. We have developed formal appraisal processes which now enable us to create person specific action plans with regards to training and career development.

We now also hold monthly team meetings, which members of staff including management all attend. This enables us to gain valuable ideas and contributions from the team and ensures that the whole company are aware of our business strategy.

What benefits have you seen from F4N?

During our F4N journey, we have undertaken many continuous improvement activities. We have become a more professional,

efficient and safety-conscious company. The F4N award recognises all we have worked towards and achieved so far.

Where do you see opportunities in nuclear?

We are currently at the beginning of our nuclear journey. Now we have been awarded F4N, we believe we are well placed to begin supplying the nuclear industry. We look forward to being guided in this process by the consultants at Nuclear AMRC.

Where do you see Fairham in five years' time?

We firmly believe we will be an integral part of the supply chain in the nuclear sector.

www.fairham.com
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Fit For Nuclear (F4N) helps UK manufacturers get ready to bid for work in the civil nuclear supply chain.

F4N
Fit For Nuclear

F4N is exclusively delivered by the Nuclear AMRC, and has been extensively developed and expanded to meet industry demand. The service lets UK manufacturers measure their operations against the standards required to supply the nuclear industry, and take the necessary steps to close any gaps.

Begin your F4N journey: namrc.co.uk/services/f4n



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