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Amall Saleh, Sustainability Construction Advisor, Tarmac

PEOPLE

OUR PEOPLE

Championing Inclusivity Through the Development of a PPE Hijab

As part of Tarmac’s commitment to create safer, more inclusive workplaces, we have played a key role in developing and launching a new Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) hijab, now available to colleagues and the wider industry. Created in partnership with PPE clothing manufacturer Leo Workwear and informed by on-site testing and lived experience from Tarmac’s Sustainability Graduate, Amall Saleh, the hijab represents a major milestone in expanding inclusive PPE options across our business.

Our Inclusive PPE Journey

Tarmac has long recognised the importance of ensuring that PPE genuinely meets the needs of everyone who wears it. In 2019, we became one of the first major UK construction companies to introduce specialist high-visibility maternity PPE, ensuring expectant mothers could continue working safely and comfortably on site.

This work has continued over recent years, with ongoing improvements in materials, sizes, and design features to better reflect the diverse needs of our workforce. The development of the new PPE hijab marks the next significant step in that journey.

Developing the PPE Hijab

The hijab was created through a collaborative, three-stage design and testing process led by Leo Workwear, with close involvement from Tarmac colleagues. As both a sustainability



construction advisor and a hijab wearer, Amall Saleh contributed direct insight into the practical challenges of existing PPE and helped shape a solution grounded in real experience.

One of the most important innovations in the final design is the ‘halo band’, a fabric band around the crown of the head that securely holds a hard hat in place without pulling or tugging on hair. This seemingly simple design detail brings significant improvements to comfort and wearability.

Amall described the experience of seeing the prototype come to life:

“Before this, I had to adapt my hijab to fit existing PPE, often making compromises. It never occurred to me that a solution could be designed specifically with my needs in mind while also meeting health and safety standards.”

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Collaboration Across Our PPE Supply Chain

The PPE hijab is the result of close engagement between colleagues, suppliers and partners. Tarmac worked not only with Leo Workwear, but also with long-standing PPE partner Arco, whose support ensured the product met both safety and cultural requirements.

Kirsten Kobrin, Category Manager FM&E, reflected on the broader journey toward inclusive PPE:

“When I started, none of the PPE I was given fit me, so I made it my mission to improve the range. Now, we offer maternity PPE, different sizes and materials, and now, the PPE hijab.”

Luke Alcock, Sales Director at Leo Workwear, highlighted the importance of listening to real-world experience:

“At Leo, we believe everyone deserves workwear that enables them to do their job safely and comfortably. Combining Amall’s real-world experience with our expertise in workwear design has resulted in an excellent product that will support many women facing the same issues.”

From Arco, Heather Sperry, National Account Manager, emphasised the value of genuine collaboration:

“The inclusion of the ‘halo band’ is a great example of how collaboration and real-world insights can drive meaningful improvements in PPE design. This project reflects our ongoing mission to improve inclusivity and comfort in workwear.”

Why it matters

The creation of the PPE hijab marks more than just a product launch, it represents a shift in

how PPE is designed, tested and delivered. By directly involving colleagues with lived experience, we’ve been able to help create a solution that is practical, respectful, and empowering.

For many women in our business, this development sends an important message: you belong here, and your needs matter. As Amall shared, seeing someone wearing PPE that reflects your identity can be transformative, especially for those considering a career in construction for the first time.

The hijab is now available for Tarmac colleagues and will also be offered across the wider industry, helping to drive broader change and support greater diversity in construction and materials.

Looking Ahead

Inclusive PPE plays a crucial role in helping people feel safe, confident and valued at work. The development of the PPE hijab reflects our commitment to fostering a workplace where everyone, regardless of gender, culture, faith or background, has what they need to thrive, while also strengthening our ability to attract and retain diverse talent.

This milestone builds on years of progress and opens the door to future innovations as we continue working with our colleagues and supply chain partners to evolve and improve our PPE range.

