MUIRHEAD TO UNVEIL CHROME- AND HEAVY METAL-FREE LEATHER TECHNOLOGY AT AIX 2024

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Muirhead is set to unveil its chrome- and heavy metal-free FreeTAN tanning solution with free FR technology at Aircraft Interiors Expo 2024. Scottish manufacturer has fully replaced its existing tanning chemistry with compostable technology, marking a significant stride in its commitment to eliminating the use of fossil fuels, oil-based elements, and heavy metals from all its operations and products. The resulting product, FreeTAN with free FR technology, is completely free from heavy metals, chrome, and glutaraldehyde.

This not only reduces its environmental impact but also ensures the product continues to meet customers' exacting performance standards. In addition, FreeTAN maintains the manufacturer's status as the leading flame-retardant leather in the industry. Its free FR technology is an efficient, non-toxic, halogen-free fire-retardant treatment that offers the lowest environmental impact aviation leather available today.

Stephen Hems, Innovation Manager, Muirhead, commented: "Tanning is a crucial part of leather production, whereby raw hides are treated in drums to transform them into our high-performance material. For over two decades, we've invested heavily in new initiatives to develop future-proof

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tanning systems that deliver unparalleled consistency and high technical excellence without relying on chrome salts and glutaraldehyde.These ground-breaking technologies are a vital next step in our journey to increase the bio-based renewable carbon content of our leather to 90% and above. However, this marks just the beginning. The leather of the future is 100% bio-based, entirely chrome-free, heavy metal-free, aldehyde-free, and fully biodegradable."

Myles Hobbs, Aviation Director EMEA and The Americas at Muirhead, said: "Our pioneering FreeTAN technology was developed to meet the aviation industry's growing need for real leather solutions that further optimise and improve environmental sustainability. It enables us to enhance the biodegradability and compostability properties of our products, all without compromising on technical performance. Meanwhile, our free FR technology is a highly efficient flame-retardant treatment, refined over the years through rigorous testing and development, free from many harmful substances, like heavy metals, fluorocarbon and bio-accumulative chemicals. These, together with the world's lowest Life Cycle Analysis for leather, make Muirhead FreeTAN with free FR a leader in the supply of the lowest-carbon aviation leather available today."

Renowned for producing the world's lowest-carbon aviation leather, Muirhead boasts a Life Cycle Analysis of just 8kg CO2e/m2, helping its customers to reduce their own carbon impact directly. Its patented circular manufacturing process incorporates energy recovery, water reuse, renewable energy, locally sourced materials with 100% traceability, and a unique take-back scheme for end-of-life leather. All its raw hides come from responsible farms with the highest standards of animal welfare and zero deforestation. Recently, the company announced the opening of its £14 million, hyper-efficient Super Tannery to further enhance the production of the world's lowest-carbon leather products.



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