GIVING SHELTER

From emergencies around the world, to military deployments in theatres such as Afghanistan, the inflatable shelter from Aireshelta is a required piece of kit. Its popularity is also growing in motorsport, as **William Kimberley** finds out

AIRESHELTA has been recognised as the leading inflatable shelter manufacturer for over 26 years, its core business being the supply of rapid deployable shelters to the emergency services. As such, it can boast that every Blue Light service in the UK, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands has owned and regularly used one of its products.

The design and product teams are used to meeting any task, creating cutting edge shelters that provide practical solutions for a number of challenges, regardless of size or environment. Often its shelters have had to undergo rigorous testing to ensure that they can survive in rugged climatic and operational conditions, such as Afghanistan, where shelters were used by the armed forces to support maintenance and logistics operations.

Listening to the requirements of the modern emergency services that carry ever more equipment, gone are the old, heavyweight products, replaced by a new breed of lightweight and compact sealed beam ones.

Sealed beam construction gives shelters from Aireshelta much greater strength in all weathers than flimsier shelter systems, and wide standing pads and water-filled side skirts provide strong anchoring. Once assembled, sealed beams give shelters the robustness required to withstand bad weather.

As the name suggests, they do not rely on a constant running inflation fan but a small compact inflation blower which is provided to give an inflation time of under two minutes. As one customer recently remarked: “It takes our kettle longer to boil than it does to inflate the Aireshelta.”

The company is very proud to be the chosen supplier to Marshalls of Cambridge for the manufacture and supply of the specialised Airesheltas used by the Ministry of Defence for the repair and service of military vehicles in current war zones. It is also the chosen supplier to the Nationwide Crash Repair Centres for the purpose-built and designed Inflatable capsules seen on many driveways for the repair of scratched or damaged vehicles.

It is the current managing director’s absolute passion for motorsport that led to the “excuse” of being able to extend the Aireshelta product range into the motorsport market. As such, Aireshelta is a regular exhibitor at the Autosport International show, Race Retro and Goodwood.

Over the last eight years, the company has seen a year on year growth in the number of Airesheltas, providing shelters to professional and amateur motorsport for many years, from individual teams competing in all classes, up to Formula 1 and the forthcoming – and very large-scale – Bloodhound SSC (Super Sonic Car) attempt to establish a new land speed record of 1,000 mph.

A certain amount of trust in the product had to be gained due to the fact that everyone only had the choice of the Ezzy-Up type frame shelters. Not that there is anything wrong with frame shelters if the requirement is only for a low-priced temporary shelter that is infrequently used. However, an Aireshelta makes more of an impact in the paddock, claims the company.

The standard sizes are 3 x 3 Paddock Pod and the 3.6 x 5 AirePod, which is ideal for kart or motorcycle racers, but it is the 4.5 x 5 CarPod, which is aimed at the individual driver running his own car, that has been designed to accommodate a standard size car and allow both doors to be opened when parked inside. The shelters can also be designed to allow equipment containers and portable workshops to be integrated through the sidewalls. HRT



ABOVE Aireshelta is making inroads into the motorsport market