

# T TRANSITIONS

## RESPONSE TECHNOLOGIES LLC SPOTLIGHT



### Navy STP Participant Response Technologies Acquired by Bell

By Jennifer Reisch

**B**ell Textron Inc. acquired Department of the Navy SBIR/STTR Transition Program (Navy STP) participant Response Technologies LLC (RT). Based in Coventry, R.I., RT develops fuel cells, fuel cell components, and textile composites. With a focus on advanced manufacturing, RT's mission aligns closely with Bell's Rapid Prototyping and Manufacturing Innovation team.

Founded in 2015 by Ed Bard and David Pettey, RT won its first SBIR award that year with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). "That was really our start as we were working on crashworthy fuel tanks for Sikorsky. Along the way we made significant technical progress and received an introduction to Naval Air Systems Command [NAVAIR] because of our fuel cell work. We prepared a brief for NAVAIR and learned that they had an immediate need for one of their Bell manufactured aircraft platforms," said Bard. "We started with NAVAIR and that got us connected to Bell.

"We began a relationship enhancing fuel cell technology with with Bell, and as

that relationship grew Bell saw the value proposition of acquiring RT and we eventually came to terms. It turns out that we were working on a much bigger problem than we had known."

According to Bard, the primary reason that Bell acquired RT was to accelerate development of fuel cells. "Bell is providing a lot of resources so this is really a win for everybody because it makes us a better supplier for the DoD. These resources make us more successful, and we're solving big problems for Bell and the industry. It truly is an all-around win."

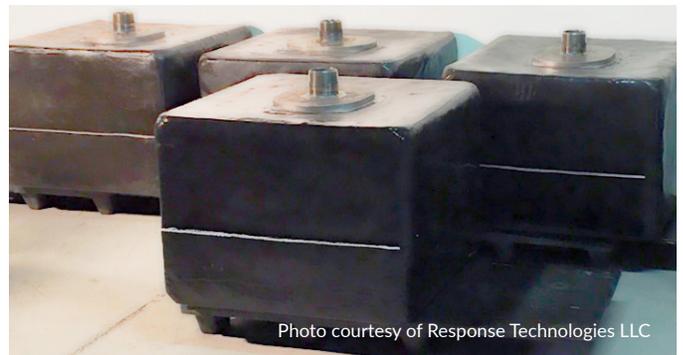


Photo courtesy of Response Technologies LLC

Fuel cell test cubes

## TRANSITIONS SPOTLIGHT

*Senol Navy STP Participant Response Technologies Acquired by Bell (continued)*

Without a doubt, Bard attributes the company's success to the SBIR program. "We found ourselves quickly in the 'valley of death.' We had some traction with Sikorsky but we would not have been able to cross the valley of death because we were not at a point to bring on investors because we were too early and we weren't working on anything compelling to the angel investor marketplace. We were working on a big problem and early on were high risk. We truly were a perfect fit for the SBIR program because we're working on something

important for the DoD and national security. The Navy and DLA have been amazing to work with," he said. "Everyone we've worked with at the Navy STP has been great," Bard said, noting that the training offered by the program has been excellent.



To learn more about Response Technologies LLC, visit the company website at [www.responsetechs.com/](http://www.responsetechs.com/)

### Response Medical Spins Off

The COVID-19 pandemic led the company down another path as well. "We're a manufacturer, doing R&D and when COVID hit we couldn't get the materials we needed for our own personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep working. Because of our team's textile manufacturing background, we had the capability to manufacture surgical masks for ourselves and contacted the DLA to determine their needs. They placed a large order of our Berry Amendment-compliant masks for use by the DoD. That order was fulfilled in November. It's certainly not a Bell competency so during the acquisition, we separated that as a standalone business called Response Medical and hired a CEO to run it. It was a business opportunity and we were able to get PPE to our troops that meet the ASTM and FDA standards and are made in the USA."



Photo courtesy of Response Technologies LLC

Response Technologies 3-layer surgical masks

