



# MEDIA RELEASE

Media Contact: Mark Wells +61 (0)414 015 966

Monday July 20, 2020.

## Multi-million investment secures Fortress Procurement's PPE supply chain.

Fortress Procurement (Fortress) and Fortun8 International have formed a strategic alliance to undertake a multi-million-dollar investment to increase its PPE supply chain. The capital will be used to install 30 new PPE lines in Malaysia and to construct a PPE manufacturing and distribution facility in China.

The increased capacity will raise PPE production of 100 per cent Nitrile examination gloves to 750 million per month; with an expected increase to over one billion units per month by December 2020.

Fortress Procurement's CEO, Mr Zaid Latif, said that the company is excited to be building its capabilities and improving control of its supply chain by expanding its facilities.

"The new facilities mean Fortress can offer a faster, more efficient response to deliver crucial PPE. We can also better manage our supply chain from manufacturing to quality control inspections; as well as the logistics associated with delivery. COVID-19 will be with us past any vaccine as it will take many years to vaccinate the world's vulnerable. PPE is going to be a part of our life for the foreseeable future," Mr Latif said.

"The United Kingdom is implementing rules to make everyone wear facemasks in retail operations. We expect other countries will follow suit and mandate that people must wear facemasks in confined public areas to limit a secondary spike of COVID-19. Other States in Australia might also follow Melbourne and mandate facemasks. The need for PPE will increase during winter when shopping malls are full; and at peak shopping times such as Christmas. Current manufacturing capacity cannot support the anticipated need for PPE," he added.

"This investment will fortify our position as one of world's foremost suppliers of PPE to governments, healthcare professionals, and the hospitality sector. We will also be able to expand our international supply networks by increasing our market share in Australia, the United Kingdom, Europe, Middle East, and the USA.

"It became very clear early in the COVID-19 pandemic that Fortress would require our own facilities to secure the manufacturing part of our supply chain. We also needed to augment the great relationships we enjoy with our compliance and logistics partners.

"Over the past six months, the PPE industry has experienced rapid change. It has also seen an influx of less reputable manufacturers who have imposed unnecessary exaggerated price hikes; and have engaged in some very disturbing and dangerous practices. Suppliers have been repackaging and reselling previously used PPE to unsuspecting buyers. Given that the manufacturers concerned with the latter are big names in the industry, it is likely that previously used PPE has found its way into the Australian and European healthcare sectors," Mr Latif said.

Fortun8's Group Executive, Mr Darren Thomas, said that forward projections indicate the need for PPE will continue to be a priority for governments, the medical, health and leisure industries, and the hospitality sector.

"Fortun8's alignment with Fortress Procurement means we are able to control the whole supply chain from manufacture to delivery. We will also be able to maintain our commitment to realistic pricing for PPE and meet our obligations to deliver consignments on time," Mr Thomas said.

"There are instances where manufacturers have accepted orders from one client, only to have the order reallocated to another client that placed a larger order or offered more money for the consignment. Every customer is reliant on PPE at the moment but with countries with larger budgets monopolising supply and some countries prohibiting the export of PPE, our new facility has never been more important," he added.

A recent spike in orders for PPE from clients in Australia means that the expansion in production lines and new facilities needs to be operational quite quickly. Interest and orders are also increasing from the United Kingdom, Middle East, and Australia. Fortress and Fortun8 are also introducing innovative PPE products, which will be produced and distributed from the new facility to control quality, distribution, and pricing.

**MEDIA NOTES:** Fortress Procurement Pty Ltd (Fortress) is your global procurement and supply chain partner. Based in Australia, but with global reach and established connections our expertise is your peace-of-mind. Specialising in procurement for the medical profession, the oil and gas industry, and defence support, Fortress offers clients a range of services including contract and finance management, inspection and compliance, strategic sourcing, logistics, warehousing, and delivery. Working closely with a range of government clients, Fortress offers a reliable procurement delivery service, innovative solutions to difficult and time-sensitive projects, without the burden of additional costs and excessive red-tape compliance.