

### Sub-sector: Protection

Protective products and end markets provide safety against cuts, abrasion, ballistic and other forms of impact, fire and heat, hazardous materials, electricity, weather, cold, and poor visibility.<sup>1</sup> Although this market is quite small, the products offer value enhancement. Thus, they are generally of high unit values. Furthermore, due to terrorism, health, and safety issues, protective textiles could become an increasingly attractive market segment.

Military textiles, an important component of the protection sub-sector, are also a very opportunistic area. This sub-sector has a large end use market that encompasses both high and low value technical products. It includes uniforms, medical products, and composites used in military equipment, temporary buildings, camouflage fabric, netting and tentage. The military sector also requires constant technical innovation and research and development.

### North Carolina Companies Competing in the Protection Sub-sector

## PERFORMANCE TEXTILE SECTORS



**Number of companies:** 91

**Number of counties:** 33

**Cluster configuration:** Guilford, Wake, Mecklenburg, Buncombe

**Sales \$ (estimated):** \$1,607,474,400

**Employees:** 4,744

**Products (sample):** Military and law enforcement uniforms, protective apparel, work gloves, tents, canvas awnings, protective jumpsuits for firefighters

The protection sub-sector ranks fourth in sales estimates and third in the number of companies competing among all other sub-sectors in North Carolina. This report is indicative of the military presence and influence in the state. The protection sub-sector provides many growth opportunities for North Carolina companies.

*Note: As North Carolina has a large military contingent, proximity to the customer can lead to innovation, enhance research and development and potentially provide a niche for a local in-state cluster.*

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<sup>1</sup> Chang, W. & Kilduff, P. (2002). The US market for technical textiles. Small Business and Technology Development Center Technical Textiles Industry Study, 1-32.