

Guidelines on the selection, use, care and maintenance of protective clothing

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National foreword

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English Version

Guidelines on the selection, use, care and maintenance of protective clothing

Guide pour la sélection, à l'utilisation, aux précautions
d'emploi et à l'entretien de vêtements de protection

Leitfaden für Auswahl, Gebrauch, Pflege und
Instandhaltung von Schutzkleidung

This Technical Report was approved by CEN on 26 December 2005. It has been drawn up by the Technical Committee CEN/TC 162.

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Foreword

This document (CEN/TR 15321:2006) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 162 “Protective clothing including hand and arm protection and lifejackets”, the secretariat of which is held by DIN.

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Introduction

European Standards for protective clothing are developed to ensure compliance with the European directive 89/686/EEC. Since the primary aim of this directive is to guarantee a free market in the European Union, these standards are made to meet the needs for a common set of safety requirements and test methods.

The actual use of protective clothing is not covered by this directive, nor by the standards related.

To meet the needs for a document on selection, use, care and maintenance, this CEN report has been made. Regulations on health and safety are based on directive 89/656/EEC, giving minimum requirements on the selection and use of PPE on the workplace. The EU Member States may impose more stringent requirements and define exposure limits. Therefore, this CEN reports gives recommendations on the process and the management, not by telling the user what to do when, but by providing checklists instead.

Furthermore, this CEN Technical Report gives an outline for other recommendations on selection, use, care and maintenance for other documents for types of protective clothing.

The information in this Technical Report has been produced to assist employers (or the person who advises the employer such as suppliers of PPE or services, inspection, insurance companies etc.) in making the necessary decisions regarding the selection, use, care and maintenance of protective clothing.

The purpose of this Technical Report is to highlight the main areas that an employer needs to consider. Most paragraphs of this Technical Report contain checklists. All of these lists are provided to give guidance only and are not exhaustive.

This Technical Report may serve as guidance and checklist when the company is preparing its own management system or program for protective clothing.

Normative references are not provided in this Technical Report. All references are of an informative nature only.

1 Scope

This Technical Report sets out guidance for the selection, use, care and maintenance of clothing designed to provide protection to the wearer. The guidance set out in this Technical Report are intended for all types of protective clothing and may be completed by additional specific guidelines for clothing designed to address specific risks.

2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this Technical Report, the following terms and definitions apply.

2.1

hazard

situation which can be the cause of harm or damage to the health of the human body

2.2

risk

combination of the frequency, or probability, of occurrence and the consequence of a specified hazardous event

2.3

selection

process of determining the type of protective equipment (garments) that is necessary for the required protection

2.4

use

application of protective clothing including its limitations

2.5

care

to keep in good working order, including procedures for cleaning, decontamination and storage

2.6

maintenance

to preserve from loss or deterioration, to include procedures for inspection, repair and ultimate removal from service

3 Selection

3.1 General

European Directive 89/656/EEC defines obligations of employers as regards selection of PPE. In particular, it mentions in section II – articles 4 and 5 that before choosing a PPE, the employer is required to assess the PPE he intends to use. This assessment shall involve:

- analysing and assessment of risks that can not be avoided by other means;
- definition of the characteristics which PPE must have in order to answer to these risks;
- assessment of the characteristics of PPE available.

The process of selecting protective clothing will follow these steps and therefore, can be divided into a number of stages.

3.2 Risk assessment

The process of carrying out a risk assessment should include:

- identification of the activities;
- list of the hazards present (a list of examples of hazards is provided in Annex C of this Technical Report);
- quantification of the risks that would result from exposure to the hazards;
- considerations of the protection provided by other control measures before the application of PPE;
- define the level of residual risks that need to be covered by protective clothing;
- determination of the level and extent of protection required from the protective clothing (in absolute or relative terms) taking into account parameters such as duration of exposure to the hazard, ambient temperature and other working conditions;
- identification of (additional) risks occurring by the use of PPE.

A number of risk assessment models may be used to determine the level of risk associated with the activities. Annex A of this Technical Report gives reference to some of the existing documents on this subject.

3.3 Defining the level of protection required for each activity from the protective clothing

- Determine what parts of the body require protection;
- determine the type of protection required;
- identify the existence of appropriate standards or methods in which performance levels or test methods against the hazard in question are defined;
- determine the level(s) of protection required (for the relevant parts of the body) in relative or absolute terms for each item of protective clothing;
- if no standard or method is available, further research (e.g. in co-operation with a notified body) may be necessary to obtain a clear set of requirements and needed protection levels.

3.4 Collecting information on available protective clothing

- Carry out market research to determine products that are available;
- analyse the performance of presently used protective clothing if applicable:
 - durability experience;
 - protection offered as opposed to protection required;
 - user's experience on ergonomics and comfort;
- obtain information from the potential suppliers on performance levels and manufacturer information;