

Focus on IFA's work

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Checklists for the selection of personal protective equipment (PPE)

Problem

At many workplaces in Germany, the health and safety of employees cannot be assured satisfactorily solely by engineered and/or organizational prevention measures. Working in safety at these workplaces is possible only by means of individual protective measures, i.e. the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). During its selection, it must be ensured that PPE offers adequate protection against the risks identified in the risk assessment. The use of an item of PPE may however give rise to additional new risks to health and safety. These must be assessed on a case-by-case basis and considered during selection. Multiple items of PPE used in combination may also reduce or cancel out the effective protection offered by the items individually. The selection and use of suitable PPE therefore frequently presents difficulties, not least in consideration of the numerous safety classes for individual items of PPE.

Activities

In 1989, EU directive 89/656/EEC was published, governing the selection and use by the plants concerned of suitable PPE. This directive was transposed in Germany in the form of the Occupational Health and Safety Ordinance. The instructions supplementary to the directive, which were published by the European Commission in 1989, serve as a practical guide for assessment of the available PPE, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises.



Maintenance/adjustment work with personal protective equipment

The IFA provides the complete annex of the European Commission's communication on the Use of Personal Protective Equipment Directive in order to provide assistance in the selection of PPE, and also maintains checklists of PPE.

The checklists cover:

- All relevant details of the risk situations in the cases at hand
- Additional information on further conditions in the workplace environment which may harbour particular risks
- Details of users' ergonomic requirements
- New risks arising through the use of the PPE

Results and Application

With the aid of the PPE checklists, users of PPE at plant level can provide their suppliers with detailed and comprehensive descriptions of the situation. This in turn enables the suppliers of PPE to offer suitable solutions. The PPE checklists can be downloaded from IFA's website.

Area of Application

All sectors of industry using PPE, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises

Additional Information

- www.dguv.de/webcode/d3193 (Download of PPE checklists)
- Christ, E.: Persönliche Schutzausrüstungen (PSA) auswählen – Risiken individuell bewerten. Sicherheitsingenieur 34 (2003) Nr. 10, S. 12-20

- Christ, E.: Persönliche Schutzausrüstungen (PSA) – Mindestvorschriften für Auswahl, Anwendung, Pflege – Informationen für Anwender. Kennzahl 400 106. In: IFA-Handbuch Sicherheit und Gesundheitsschutz am Arbeitsplatz. Lfg. 1 – VIII/2008. Hrsg.: Deutsche Gesetzliche Unfallversicherung, Berlin. 2. Auflage. Erich Schmidt, Berlin 2003 – Losebl.-Ausg.
www.ifa-handbuchdigital.de/400106
- Regeln für den Einsatz von Persönlichen Schutzeinrichtungen (DGUV Regeln 112-189 bis 112-201, bisher: BGR 189 bis 201). Carl Heymanns, Köln, or at
www.dguv.de/fb-psa

Expert Assistance

IFA, Division 4: Ergonomics – Physical environmental factors

Literature Requests

IFA, Central Division