

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

*Personal Protective Equipment Regs 2002: 1144 ECA
as amended by 2004: 693, 2012: 632, 2012: 1848 and 2015: 1630
time limit: 12 months*

Application

1). PPE is a device or appliance, or combinations thereof, designed to be worn or held for protection against health and safety hazards, whether or not combined with non-protective equipment. It includes essential interchangeable components used only for PPE.

2). These regulations do not control

- ♣ helmets and visors for motorcyclists,
- ♣ PPE which is
 - ♥ for use by armed forces,
 - ♥ for use in the maintenance of law and order,
 - ♥ covered by another Directive,
 - ♥ for self-defence,
 - ♥ for the protection or rescue of people on vessels or aircraft, not worn all the time,
 - ♥ designed and manufactured for private use against adverse weather, damp and water, **and** heat,
 - ♥ displayed at trade fairs and exhibitions with a notice saying that it is not for sale,
 - ♥ placed on the market before 1 July 1992.

Definitions

1). **PPE of simple design** - PPE intended to protect the wearer against

- ♣ mechanical action whose effects are superficial
 - ♥ eg gardening gloves, thimbles,
- ♣ weak cleaning materials with easily reversible effects
 - ♥ eg gloves for protection against detergents,
- ♣ temperatures of less than 50°C or dangerous impacts
 - ♥ eg gloves, aprons for professional use,
- ♣ minor atmospheric agents
 - ♥ eg headgear, seasonal clothing, footwear,
- ♣ minor impacts and vibrations against non-vital areas of the body whose effects are reversible
 - ♥ eg light anti-scalping helmets, gloves, light footwear,
- ♣ sunlight
 - ♥ eg sunglasses.

2). **Complex PPE** -

- ♣ filtering respiratory devices for protection against solid and liquid aerosols or irritant, dangerous, toxic or radiotoxic gases,
- ♣ respiratory protection devices providing full insulation from the atmosphere, including those for use in diving,
- ♣ PPE providing only limited protection against chemical attack or against ionising radiation,
- ♣ emergency equipment for use in high-temperature environments, emergency equipment for use in low temperature environments,

- ♣ PPE to protect against falls from a height, **and**
 - ♣ PPE to protect against electrical risks and dangerous voltages or that used as insulation in high-tension work.
- 3). **Responsible person** - the manufacturer or his authorised representative in the Community, or, if neither are established in the Community, the person who places the PPE on the market.

General Requirements

- 1). No person may supply PPE unless it is safe, ie when used as intended could not compromise the health and safety (H&S) of users without prejudice to the H&S of other people, pets or property(!),
- 2). The responsible person placing PPE on the market must ensure that
 - ♣ it satisfies basic H&S requirements (Sch 2) (see below), (PPE conforming to a harmonised standard covering one or more of the basic health and safety requirements is presumed to comply),
 - ♣ the appropriate conformity assessment procedure has been carried out by the manufacturer, or, where permitted by procedure, his authorised representative established in the Community (see below),
 - ♣ the CE marking has been affixed (see below), **and**
 - ♣ when properly maintained and used for its intended purpose it does not compromise the H&S of individuals, pets or property(!).

Basic H&S requirements

- 1). Must not
 - ♣ cause irritation or injury,
 - ♣ create danger by impeding movement or vision,
 - ♣ restrict vision.
- 2). Must
 - ♣ fit correctly,
 - ♣ be light but strong,
 - ♣ be suitable for wearers of glasses or contact lenses,
 - ♣ be accompanied by information on
 - ♥ storage, use, cleaning, maintenance and disinfection,
 - ♥ performance test results,
 - ♥ accessories and characteristics of spare parts,
 - ♥ classes of protection/levels of risk/limits of use,
 - ♥ obsolescence deadline,
 - ♥ type of packaging for transport,
 - ♥ the significance of any markings,
 - ♥ the name, address and identification number of any notified body involved in the design stage,
 - ♣ have the obsolescence deadline indelibly affixed to it, if known.
- 3). Parts of outfits must be compatible.
- 4). 'Overalls' must be ventilated or absorb perspiration.
- 5). If a part is likely to be caught up by a moving object, that part must break to eliminate danger.
- 6). If it is likely to be used in an explosive atmosphere, it must not be likely to generate sparks.

- 7). Adjustable or removable components must be able to be added, adjusted or removed by hand.
- 8). Only compatible parts must be able to be attached.
- 9). Any H&S marks on the PPE should preferably be in pictogram or ideogram form, and must be perfectly legible throughout the foreseeable useful life. If the PPE is small, marks may be on the packaging.
- 10). Luminous clothing must be of appropriate intensity.
- 11). The strength of PPE must be maximised against inconvenience to the wearer.
- 12). Footwear must grip properly.
- 13). Lifejackets, armbands etc must be wholly or partly inflated **or** inflate rapidly and fully, **and**, if appropriate
 - ♣ must inflate **and/or** have a light or sound-signalling device,
 - ♣ have a hook to lift the wearer out of the water,
 - ♣ be suitable for prolonged use during the risk period.
- 14). Buoyancy aids must not restrict freedom of movement.
- 15). Ear defenders (or, if impossible, their packaging) must be marked with
 - ♣ the noise attenuation level,
 - ♣ the comfort index.
- 16). Thermal clothing must
 - ♣ be sufficiently flexible,
 - ♣ prevent fingers and toes etc from becoming painfully cold,
 - ♣ prevent penetration of rain water, as far as possible,
 - ♣ include notes on maximum permissible user exposure to the cold.
- 17). Face masks must
 - ♣ adequately filter air,
 - ♣ be adequately leak-proof,
 - ♣ bear
 - ♥ the manufacturer's mark,
 - ♥ the details of its specific characteristics to enable a trained and qualified user to use it correctly,
 - ♥ include notes on the deadline for the storage of filters.
- 18). Diving suits must
 - ♣ protect against pressure and/or cold,
 - ♣ have an alarm to warn against lack of oxygen,
 - ♣ enable the user to return to the surface.

Conformity Assessment Procedure

- 1). All PPE must be the subject of a technical file which shows how the PPE complies with the basic requirements, in particular
 - ♣ overall and detailed plans, calculation notes, and test results,
 - ♣ a list of
 - ♥ the basic safety requirements,
 - ♥ the harmonised standards,
 - ♥ the technical specifications,
 - ♣ a description of his QA-type systems,
 - ♣ information in English on
 - ♥ storage, use, cleaning, maintenance, servicing and disinfection (which must not adversely affect the PPE),

- ♥ the performance of the PPE especially regarding the levels of protection it offers,
 - ♥ suitable accessories and characteristics of spare parts,
 - ♥ the limits of use,
 - ♥ the shelf-life,
 - ♥ the transportation packaging,
 - ♥ the significance of any markings.
- 2). Simple PPE must also be the subject of a declaration of conformity.
- 3). Complex PPE in series production must also be the subject of a declaration of conformity, of an EC type-examination (Sch 7), **and** one of the two checking procedures described in Sch 8,
- 4). PPE in series production that is not simple or complex must also be the subject of a declaration of conformity, and an EC type-examination.

CE Marking

A CE mark must

- ♣ be at least 5mm high (**unless** the PPE is small),
- ♣ include the number of the notified body (if one was involved),
- ♣ be visible, legible and indelible throughout the product's expected life, **unless** this is not possible because of the product's characteristics (in which case the markings must be affixed to the packaging),
- ♣ not be rendered less visible or legible by other marks, and no markings may be affixed which could deceive about the meaning and form of the CE mark,
- ♣ indicate that the PPE fulfils the requirements of any other CE marking that applies to it.

Compliance Notice

1). **Except for** taking enforcement action

- ♣ under the CRA to ascertain whether a CE mark has been correctly affixed,
- ♣ in respect of PPE which, when used as intended, endangers the safety of people, pets or property, **or**
- ♣ after the expiry of a compliance notice,

the **only** enforcement action which may be taken in respect of non-compliant PPE which is CE marked is the serving of a compliance notice on the responsible person.

2). The notice must

- ♣ state that a CE mark has been affixed incorrectly,
- ♣ give reasons for suspicions,
- ♣ either
 - ♥ require the infringement to be rectified within a specified period, **or**
 - ♥ require evidence of compliance to be produced,
- ♣ warn that further action may be taken if the notice is not complied with.