

BSI Update: PPE Directive



The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Directive is a fundamental piece of European legislation relating to occupational safety throughout Europe. The Directive is currently under review and the revised version is likely to come into effect by the end of 2014. The general principles of the revision have been agreed upon at an international level across the EU, but the exact changes are yet to be announced.

Why are the changes happening?

The PPE Directive is being reviewed and re-written to bring it in-line with other more recent 'New Approach Directives', other Directives such as the Lift Safety Directive are going through the same process. It is a revision not a complete rewrite so the principles of certification will remain the same as before.

What are the changes expected to be?

Some of the likely changes are to be as follows;

- 1 The move from Cat 2 (Intermediate) to Cat 3 (Complex) which will require EC Type Examination plus on-going surveillance for the following product types;
 - Life jackets
 - Hearing protection
 - Knife and stab protection
 - Pressure cutting equipment
 - Chainsaw protective equipment
- 2 Foul weather clothing to be removed from the PPE Directive
- 3 Inclusion of oven gloves for private use
- 4 Alignment of Article types in line with more recent New Approach Directives i.e.
 - Cat 1 PPE requiring compliance with Module A (Internal Control of Production)
 - Cat 2 PPE requiring compliance with Module B (EC Type Examination)
 - Cat 3 PPE requiring compliance with Module B and either D (Product Quality Assurance) or F1 (Product verification)
- 5 Changes to documentary requirements;
 - put a time limit on the validity of EC type-examination certificates

- require a technical file for category 1 PPE under discussion;
- harmonise the content of EC type-examination certificates
- require the Declaration of Conformity to be supplied with the PPE

- 6 Changes to the Essential Health and Safety Requirements.

How are the changes likely to affect manufacturers?

For some manufactures, their products will be re-classified so they will require some form of on-going surveillance that they did not need before.

As there will be changes to the products covered under the scope of the PPE Directive manufacturers may need to arrange for:

- Different products to be certified to the PPE Directive
- Products that are no longer covered by the PPE Directive to be certified to a different Directive.

How can manufacturers prepare for the changes?

Manufacturers should keep up-to-date with how the draft is progressing and take note when any updates that are added.

When will the changes come into effect?

The proposed draft is due out towards the end of 2012 with a two year discussion period. Publication date is likely to be towards the end of 2014 with a probable 2 year transition timeframe.

How can manufacturers keep up to date with the changes?

As a member of the British Safety Industry Federation, BSI will keep Clients updated as new information is announced. Look out for updates via emails and our Kitemark News e-newsletter.

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