

## Code of Practice

# PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work Regulations 1992 place responsibilities on employers to implement certain basic health and safety requirements regarding the provision and use of PPE. The Radiocommunications Agency is committed to effectively applying them.
- 1.2 PPE can be defined as all equipment (including clothing affording protection against the weather) which is intended to be worn or held by a person at work and which protects against one or more risks to their health or safety, e.g. safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, safety footwear, safety harnesses, etc.
- 1.3 Ordinary working clothes and uniforms that do not specifically protect against risks to health and safety are not covered by the regulations (e.g. corporate wear).
- 1.4 Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 employers are required to carry out workplace risk assessments, so enabling them to select the most appropriate means of reducing any identified risks to an acceptable level. Employers should eliminate or minimise risks as close as possible to the source of the risk, thereby protecting everyone in the workplace. PPE should always be regarded as the '**last resort**' for protection from risk as it only protects the wearer and can be compromised, e.g. by not being worn or being used incorrectly.
- 1.5 This Code of Practice has been developed under the Agency's Health and Safety Policy and has the same authority as that policy. It sets out guidelines on how to manage the provision and use of PPE and applies to all workplaces and work activities where PPE is required (subject to Section 7 of this Code).

### 2. AIMS

- 2.1 To develop a proactive management response where PPE is deemed necessary to protect the health and safety of employees.
- 2.2 To ensure compliance with legislative requirements.
- 2.3 To establish and maintain a PPE risk assessment process, with documented records where appropriate.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Notwithstanding the health and safety responsibilities outlined within Section 2 of the Health and Safety Policy the following specific responsibilities apply with regard to the provision and use of PPE.

#### 3.1 Managers/Supervisors

Managers/Supervisors are responsible on a day to day basis for ensuring the implementation of this Code for the staff within their control. In particular they must:

- 3.1.1 Familiarise themselves with the content of this Code, and actively inform staff.
- 3.1.2 Ensure that specific assessments are carried out for both the risk to be protected against and the different types of PPE that could be used to protect an individual from that risk. On this basis the suitability of the selected PPE against the risk will be assessed, thereby ensuring any PPE provided is suitable for the intended purpose. Simple and obvious assessments that can easily be explained need not be recorded, however more complex assessments should be recorded and kept readily accessible to those who need to know the results. These assessments should be periodically reviewed, including consideration as to whether more suitable PPE has subsequently become available.
- 3.1.3 Ensure that employees receive suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training with regard to PPE supplied.
- 3.1.4 Take all reasonable steps to ensure the full and proper use, storage, maintenance, cleaning, examination, repair and replacement of PPE. This may involve taking disciplinary measures in accordance with Agency disciplinary procedures, where employees fail to use PPE correctly.  
*[Note: Much of this may be delegated to the PPE user, however a supervisory and monitoring role is retained to ensure actions are carried out.]*
- 3.1.5 Periodically carry out recorded audits of any PPE held by team members (i.e. at least annually). This shall include a visual inspection of the equipment and storage accommodation provided.

#### 3.2 Employees

Employees have personal responsibilities to ensure the effectiveness of any safe system of work provided. In particular they must:

- 3.2.1 Ensure that PPE provided is used, maintained and cleaned in accordance with the training, instruction and information received and used for official purposes only (unless prior management approval obtained).
- 3.2.2 Take all reasonable steps to return PPE to storage accommodation provided for it after use. If not possible, to take all-reasonable steps to safeguard the condition of PPE when temporarily stored elsewhere.
- 3.2.3 Regularly examine PPE and report any defect, damage or loss to their manager/supervisor.
- 3.2.4 Inform their manager/supervisor of any medical conditions that may affect their ability to wear or use PPE.

***[Note: Non-compliance with 3.2 of this Code is a disciplinary matter and may be dealt with in accordance with Agency disciplinary procedures.]***

### **3.3 Agency Health and Safety Officer**

3.3.1 The Agency Health and Safety Officer has the responsibility to support and monitor the process of provision and use of PPE. In particular PPE provision and use will be targeted during inspections and audits and a periodic review of this Code shall be carried out (i.e. annually).

### **3.4 Local Health and Safety Officers**

3.4.1 All other nominated Health and Safety Officers/Co-ordinators within the Agency have responsibilities to support and monitor implementation of this Code on a local basis.

## **4. ARRANGEMENTS**

4.1 All PPE provided by the Agency shall be used only as a last resort when it is sure that the task is necessary and there is no safer way of accomplishing it or dealing with residual risk. It shall comply with the following general rules:

- a) Be supplied free of charge.
- b) Be suitable for the task intended and adequately control the risk involved.
- c) Take into account any ergonomic requirements and the state of health of the person(s) who may wear it. [The aim shall always be to choose PPE that will give minimum discomfort to the wearer, as uncomfortable equipment is unlikely to be worn properly.]
- d) Be capable of fitting the wearer correctly and be compatible with any other items of PPE that may be worn at the same time.
- e) Does not contribute to increasing any other risk such that overall risk increases.
- f) Comply with all relevant EC Directives and carry the 'CE' mark (if PPE supplied after July 1995). [It is advisable to purchase from reputable suppliers only, and satisfy yourself as to suitability for intended use prior to purchase.]
- g) Be readily available for use.

4.2 Suitable representatives of the workforce intended to wear items of PPE shall be involved in its selection and specification to ensure its suitability.

4.3 Where individuals experience problems in wearing selected PPE medical advice may be sought as to whether the individual can tolerate wearing the PPE.

4.4 Suitable accommodation shall be provided so that PPE can be safely stored or kept when it is not in use. The accommodation shall protect PPE from contamination, damage or loss. [Note: This can vary greatly from clothes hooks to carrying cases or containers to lockers, whatever is suitable.]

4.5 Prior to individuals using any PPE for the first time they shall receive adequate information, instruction and training in its use. A competent person (e.g. an experienced manager or colleague or a supplier's representative) shall carry out training, with suitable records kept. It must make the user aware of why PPE is needed; when it is to be used, repaired or replaced; cleaning and maintenance requirements; and the PPE's limitations.

4.6 A recorded PPE issue, repair and replacement procedure shall operate. PPE shall be repaired or replaced if damaged or subject to wear and tear such that its integrity is affected. Additionally identified items of PPE will be replaced automatically after certain time periods to assure their integrity – time periods may vary dependant on factors such as good practice and manufacturer's recommendations. An example of a suitable type of record sheet is attached at Appendix A –any such local records should contain similar information.

4.7 A risk survey for the use of PPE when carrying out visits and raids has been carried out and is attached as Appendix B. This identifies risks that may be presented to different parts of the body, which PPE may help overcome. This survey shall be reviewed annually or more frequently as needs dictate. Guidance on standards for PPE are identified in Appendix C – note that this list is not intended to be exhaustive. It is recognised that local needs may vary, however it is essential that any provision and standard of PPE be based on the results of risk assessment.

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 All existing employees will be advised about this Code through normal channels and the Code will be made available on the Intranet.

5.2 Health and safety awareness training will include input on PPE.

5.3 Copies of the Code will be distributed to Heads of Business Units.

## 6. OTHER REGULATIONS

6.1 The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 do not apply where PPE is provided under existing regulations. Such regulations already require the use of some types of PPE to protect against certain risks and relevant provisions should be adhered to. They include:

- The Control of Lead at Work Regulations 1980
- The Ionising Radiations Regulations 1985
- The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 1987
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999
- The Construction (Head Protection) Regulations 1989
- The Noise at Work Regulations 1989

6.2 However, where one of these sets of regulations applies then the requirements of this Code will also usually apply, as the general principles of selecting and maintaining suitable PPE and training employees in its use are common to all Regulations that refer to PPE.

## 7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

7.1 For further help, advice and information you can contact any of the following

- The Agency Health and Safety Officer (Tel: 020 7211 0492)
- In RA3, the Health and Safety Co-ordinator or your Local Safety Officer
- Your Line Manager
- Your Trade Union Safety Representative
- The Health and Safety Executive Infoline (Tel: 0541 545500)

Additionally, the Facilities Resource Unit (FRU) holds a number of reference materials, which include advice regarding provision and use of PPE.

**RECORD OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

NAME:			
JOB TITLE:			
REGION:			
LOCATION:			



NO.	ITEM	REQ Y/N	ISSUE DATE (IF KNOWN)	CENTRE OR LOCAL	REC M L P	SUPPLIER	IITS REC'D	REPLACE DATE
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1	Safety helmet							
2	Safety Goggles							
3	Ear Muffs/Plugs							
4	Wellington boots							
5	Safety shoes/Boots							
6	Stab-proof vest + cover							
7	Groin guard and Box							
8	Disposable gloves							
9	Search gloves							
10	Forearm Guards (2)							
11	Weather Protection Jacket							
12	Overtrousers							
13	Ballistic Clipboard + Case							
14	Disposable face masks							
15	Disposable Boiler suits							
16	High Visibility Jacket							
17	High Visibility Coat							
18	High Visibility Waistcoat							
19	Orange HV Jacket							
20	Life Jacket							
21	Boots/Shoes (Deck)							
22	Safety Harness							
23	Safety Belts							

**OTHER RELATED ITEMS (not specifically PPE)**

1	Anonymous sweat shirt							
2	RA polo shirt							
3	RA Fleece							
4	Vehicle First Aid Kit							
5	Jumper							
6	Baseball Cap							

**KEY:****REQ** = Required for staff member**REC M L P** = Recommended 'maximum life period' of PPE Item (if applicable)**CENTRE** = Normally purchased centrally**IITS REC'D** = Date information, instruction & training received. Supervision may be ongoing.**LOCAL** = Normally purchased locally**REPLACE DATE** = Anticipated Replacement Date**ANNUAL PPE INSPECTION CARRIED OUT****BY WHOM**

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**DATE**

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## Risk Survey Table for the Use of Personal Protective Equipment by RA3 Regional Field Staff

Specific Regulations may apply to the appropriate hazard, i.e. The Control of Lead at Work Regulations 1980; The Ionising Radiations Regulations 1985; The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 1987; The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999; The Noise at Work Regulations 1989.

## Guidance on Standards for PPE

### (Relates to RA3 Field Staff PPE Provision)

#### **Important Notes:**

1. All items identified should be made available for use by RA3 field staff as required where the officer has the required training and competence levels to use them effectively. This list is not intended to be exhaustive and local needs may vary.
2. Generally protective clothing to comply with BS EN 340 *General requirements for protective clothing* – plus any additional standards and/or specific requirements stated for each individual item given below.
3. All new PPE must comply with current British and European standards.
4. All PPE purchased after July 1995 must carry relevant CE markings to certify meets minimum European standards at the time of purchase.
5. Selected PPE for a work activity must be compatible with any other PPE that may be worn at the same time.
6. PPE to be repaired or replaced when damaged or past useful life or when an improved (cost effective) alternative becomes available.
7. All PPE may be used for official purposes only (*except where management approval obtained*).
8. Where required suitable carrying aids, such as holdalls, should be provided.

#### **HIGH VISIBILITY WORKWEAR**

- **For use in situations of poor light, adverse weather conditions**
- **For use when requiring highly conspicuous (i.e. easily seen/visible)**

##### **Hi-Vis Coat (for cold/adverse weather condition use)**

BS EN 471 *Specification for high-visibility warning clothing* – Class 3

Require protection against weather hazards, e.g. waterproof, thermal protection

##### **Hi-Vis Jacket (for general use)**

BS EN 471 *Specification for high-visibility warning clothing* – Class 3

##### **Hi-Vis Waistcoat (suitable for off-road & on-road use)**

BS EN 471 *Specification for high-visibility warning clothing* – Class 2

##### **Hi-Vis Orange Jacket (suitable for railway use)**

BS EN 471 *Specification for high-visibility warning clothing* – Class 3

Require protection against weather hazards, e.g. waterproof, thermal protection

#### **FALL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT (specialised use only)**

- **For specialised use when working at height and danger of a fall exists**
- **Maximums of 10 year shelf life and 5 year use life**
- **Not for general issue – users must be authorised and suitably competent**

Specific written risk assessment will be required prior to purchase and/or use of such equipment. The risk assessment will determine the safety requirements and measures needed to be taken prior to use, including information instruction and training.

Main relevant European Standards are:

BS EN 358 *PPE for work positioning and prevention of falls from a height: Belts for work positioning and restraint and work positioning lanyards*

BS EN 360 *PPE against falls from height: retractable type fall arresters (e.g. blocks)*

BS EN 361 *PPE against falls from height: full body harnesses*

BS EN 363 *Fall arrest systems*

Many other BS EN standards may be applicable depending on the equipment required.

## HEAD PROTECTION

- For use in situations where hazards include striking head against fixed objects or being struck by either moving objects at head height or falling objects from above
- For use whenever on construction sites or places with difficult, low or awkward access arrangements
- To be replaced at least every five years regardless of condition

**Safety Helmet with chin strap** (also refer to eye protection and hearing protection)  
BS EN 397 *Industrial safety helmets – specification for construction and performance*

**Climbers' Helmets** (specialist use only – not for general issue)

prEN *Climbers' safety helmets*

Standards for use in mountaineering, including climbing. Require chinstrap with chin cup.  
Note: Users must be authorised and suitably qualified to climb.

## HEARING PROTECTION

- For use when exposed to high noise levels
- For use when working with noisy work equipment, such as a grinder

**Ear Muffs**

BS EN 352-1 Hearing protector requirements and testing

**Ear Muffs/Defenders (worn with safety helmet)**

BS EN 352-3 Hearing protector requirements and testing

**Ear Plugs**

BS EN 352-1 Hearing protector requirements and testing

## EYE PROTECTION

- For use when using work equipment for cutting, grinding or finishing purposes

**Safety Goggles**

BS EN 166 *Personal eye protection: Specifications*

Require protection against chemical, splash, dust, gas and molten metal

**Face Screen/Shield**

BS EN 166 *Personal eye protection: Specifications*

Require protection against chemical, splash, dust, gas and molten metal. If used with safety helmet must be compatible.

## FOOT PROTECTION

- **For use on-site as appropriate to the hazards faced**

### **Safety Shoes/Boots**

*BS EN 345 Specification for safety footwear for professional use*

Where applicable, ladies safety footwear to additionally comply with *BS 4972 Specifications for women's protective footwear*.

Require steel toecaps to 200 joules protection, oil resistance and anti-static features.

Where shoes/boots are required for specific tasks, such as rigger boots, a separate risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure selected footwear addresses any risks faced.

### **Wellington Boots**

*BS EN 345 Specification for safety footwear for professional use*

Require steel toecaps to 200 joules protection, water repellent and anti-static features.

**Deck Shoes/Boots** (See Marine Clothing/Accessories)

## HAND/FOREARM PROTECTION

- **For use in various situations to protect the hands from identified hazards**
- **All gloves to comply with BS EN 420 General requirements for gloves**

### **Gloves for protection against mechanical hazards (for UBR 2<sup>nd</sup> level protection)**

*BS EN 388 Protective gloves against mechanical risks*

Require sufficient protection against abrasion, blade cut, tear, puncture hazards (to minimum of CE 4242 standard). Similar standard gauntlets may be provided for door opening UBRs.

### **Anti Syringe Glove/Gauntlet (not for general issue - available for UBR 1<sup>st</sup> level protection)**

*BS EN 388 Protective gloves against mechanical risks*

Require heavy-duty mechanical protection against hazards such as hypodermic needles, glass and razor blades (To CE 4544 standard).

### **Rigger/General Use Gloves (for general use)**

*BS EN 388 Protective gloves against mechanical risks*

Require sufficient protection against abrasion, blade cut, tear, puncture hazards (to minimum of CE 4121 standard). Where tasks have specific hazards outside this standard then specific gloves to address those risks required, including thermal protection if required to work outside in cold weather conditions.

### **Disposable Gloves**

*BS EN 374 Protective gloves against chemicals and micro-organisms*

### **Forearm Guard**

Knife and blow resistant and resistant to animal attack, e.g. dogs. Suitable for door opening use during door opening cases.

## MARINE CLOTHING/ACCESSORIES

- For use when working on or near water where there is a foreseeable risk of drowning, e.g. boat related activities

### **Life Jacket**

BS EN 396 *Life-jackets and personal buoyancy aids: life jackets 150 N*

Suitability for use in enclosed/sheltered waters and flowing/tidal coastal waters. Requires automatic inflation with manual mechanism, highly conspicuous, whistle and grab/lift loop.

**Note:** Servicing should take place every two years, plus annual replacement of the auto recharge kit.

### **Coastal Jacket/Safety Harness**

BS EN 340 *General requirements for protective clothing*

Suitable for inshore and coastal use during warm seasons. Water resistant, breathable with highly conspicuous features and lifejacket attachment tabs. May to include internal harness – where not possible supply separate safety harness or lifejacket with harness properties.

### **Safety Lanyard Attached to Operator's Key**

All trained crew members should carry one while on board in case they need to operate the boat. Cuts engine when key pulled from ignition.

### **Safety Line**

Suitable for attachment from boat to safety harness. Two metre length with steel hooks. Should be kept on board boat for emergency use, such as where weather changes suddenly. Should be sufficient number for all crew members use, i.e. three lines.

### **Coastal Trousers**

BS EN 340 *General requirements for protective clothing*

Suitable for inshore and coastal use during warm seasons. Water resistant and breathable.

### **Deck Shoes/Boots**

BS EN 345 *Specification for safety footwear for professional use*

Suitable for on/off-boat uses. Hard wearing, slip resistant, offering weather protection and of a type not to mark the boat.

## RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

- For use when working in situations where toxic dust, fibres, water based mists of solid or liquid aerosols, or oil based particulates may be present
- For use when work involves wood dust, metallic dust/fumes (welding/soldering), brick dust, grinding or buffing

### **Disposable Filtering Facepiece Respirators (Facemasks)**

BS EN 149 *Standards for disposable filtering facepiece respirators for particulates only*

A suitable respirator must be used based on the risks involved in the activities carried out.

## WEATHERWEAR

- For use to provide warmth and comfort in foul weather conditions

### Weather Protection Jacket

BS EN 340 *General requirements for protective clothing*  
Require waterproof, thermal and breathable properties.

### Over Trousers

BS EN 340 *General requirements for protective clothing*  
Require waterproof and breathable properties.

## MISCELLANEOUS PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

### Cotton Boilersuit or Limited Life Coverall (*Disposable Boiler Suit*)

BS EN 340 *General requirements for protective clothing*  
Required to act as a barrier for the body and clothing against general oils, liquids, fluids, mud and dusts.

### Stab Proof Vest (*provision and protection standard currently under review*)

Required to act as a barrier to resist 42 joules of energy against stabbing, slashing or syringe penetration.

### Groin Guard and Box

Required to be impact protecting and removable for sterilisation purposes.

### Ballistic Clipboard (*provision need currently under review*)

Required to be impact resistant to bullets, stabbing, slashing or syringe penetration.

### Barrier Creams Against UV Radiation

Required to protect from the Sun's harmful UV radiation where staff work outside for prolonged periods of exposure, particularly during the warm seasons. High protection barrier cream to be provided as and when required.

### General Purpose Barrier Creams

Required to protect against general irritants such as oils, dust, grime, grease and solvents. Suitable for use all over the body, such as face, hands and forearms.

### Narda Alert (*not strictly defined as PPE*)

Required to be carried when risk of high radio frequency during inspections. Gives warning indicator of pre-determined radiation levels.

### Fleece Jacket (*not provided as PPE, though affords some weather/cold protection*)

Should have waterproof and breathable properties.