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**SafeT smart**

## PPE - A little history lesson

In 1898 a Californian mining company was started by Edward Dickinson Bullard. Originally the company supplied lamps, leather protective hats and other mining equipment to gold and copper miners in California, Nevada and Arizona. Then In 1918 Bullard's son, E.W. Bullard, returned home from World War I. He brought with him something inspirational that would change his father's company forever. The item was a battered and worn steel helmet. Less than a year later Bullard Snr had patented a 'Hard-Boiled Hat' which was made from steamed layers of canvas and resin which was glued together then molded to form a protective hat. Soon after Bullard was commissioned by the US Navy to create a protective cap. The use of hard hats soon became widespread. The construction of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco (1933) saw the first construction site where it was mandatory that all employees wear hard hats while onsite.

Thankfully personal protective equipment (PPE) has improved since those early days. Today you will find eye, foot, hearing, respiratory and hand protection, as well as specific equipment when working at heights.

In New Zealand each employee must be supplied with sufficient PPE to perform their tasks. An induction must also be provided (and recorded) to train employees how to wear and use PPE correctly.

## It's the law...

As mentioned above there are several types of PPE:

- *Hearing protection*
  - *Head protection*
  - *Eye protection*
  - *Foot protection*
  - *Hand and arm protection*
  - *Body protection*
  - *Respiratory protection*
- to this we can add:
- *Fire Extinguishers and*
  - *Height Safety*

Protective clothing and equipment required under the HSE act, section 10 is broadly defined to include much more.

Such as:

- *guarding or arresting devices*
- *rails*
- *covers*
- *damping*
- *filtration and dust collection systems*
- *shields*
- *screens etc.*

Employers should take "all practicable steps" to reduce employees' exposure to

hazards.

Simply "**providing**" protective clothing and equipment is not enough. The PPE must be "**available**" to all those who need it (whether they are paid employees, visitors, or volunteers.).

The employer must see that the PPE is "**used**". This will usually mean employers are required to provide protective clothing and equipment which is fit for the purpose, to clearly instruct employees how to use it, and to ensure that they do use.

"Available" means readily and easily accessible. Instruction should not only cover when and where to use the equipment, but also how to use it.

*The requirement to instruct employees in the use of protective equipment should be read in conjunction with that of section 12 of the HSE Act which requires that employees are advised of the hazards they may experience in their work, and the steps or controls needed to overcome them.*

## The Basic PPE FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions

### Who should pay for PPE for employees\*?

If items of Personal Protective Equipment are required for a task they must be provided free of charge by the employer.

### When am I suppose to use PPE?

You should receive instruction from your supervisor or manager regarding your tasks and the hazards associated with those tasks. You will also receive instruction regarding when, where and/or what PPE you should use for each particular task.

If a hazard cannot be eliminated or isolated, then PPE is used to minimise the hazard. PPE must always be regarded as a 'last resort' to protect against risks to safety and health. Other controls must be considered first. For example, it may be possible to do the job using methods that will not require the use of PPE. If this is not possible, more effective safeguards should be put in place. For example, fixed screens could be provided rather than individual eye protection.

Why is PPE a last resort?

There are a number of reasons why PPE must be considered as a 'last resort':

- PPE only protects the person wearing it, whereas measures controlling the risk at source protect everyone in the workplace
- PPE may restrict the wearer to some extent by limiting mobility or visibility, or by requiring additional weight to be carried. Thus creating additional hazards.

### What type of information, instruction and training should be given for PPE use?

The extent of information, instruction and/or training for PPE will vary with the complexity and performance of the kit. For example, a full Breathing Apparatus kit will require more training to use properly than a disposable face mask.

However, information and instruction should cover the following:

- The risk(s) present and why the PPE is needed.
- The operation (including demonstration), performance and limitations of the equipment.
- Use and storage (including how to put it on, how to adjust and remove it).
- Any testing requirements before use.
- Any user maintenance that can be carried out (e.g. hygiene/cleaning procedures).
- Factors that can affect the performance of the equipment (e.g. working conditions, personal factors, defects and damage).
- How to recognise defects in PPE, and arrangements for reporting them.
- Where to obtain replacement PPE.
- In addition to initial training, refresher training may be required from time to time.

### How do you assess or choose PPE? How do I know it is suitable for the task?

The need for PPE must be identified through Risk Assessment. Risk assessments should be reviewed by employers and employees. To be able to choose the right type of PPE, the hazards involved in the task or work environment must be considered carefully. PPE must also meet the needs of the individual.

The following factors should be considered when assessing the suitability of PPE:

- Is the PPE appropriate for the risk involved and conditions at the place where exposure may occur? e.g. goggles are not suitable when full-face protection is required.
- Does the PPE prevent or adequately control the risks involved without increasing the overall risk? e.g. gloves should not be worn when using a pillar drill, due to the increased risk of entanglement.
- Can the PPE be adjusted to fit the wearer correctly? e.g. if a person wears glasses, ear defenders may not provide a proper seal to protect against noise hazards.
- What are the needs of the job and the demands it places on the wearer?
- How long will the PPE need to be worn?
- What are the requirements for visibility and communication?
- If more than one item of PPE is being worn, are they compatible? e.g. does a particular type of respirator make it difficult for eye protection to fit properly?

### Why, how and who is responsible for maintaining PPE?

An effective system of maintenance of PPE is essential to make sure the equipment continues to provide the degree of protection for which it is designed. Therefore, the manufacturer's maintenance schedule (including recommended replacement periods and shelf lives) must always be followed.

Maintenance may include; cleaning, examination, replacement, repair and testing. The wearer may be able to carry out simple maintenance (e.g. cleaning), but more intricate repairs must only be carried out by competent personnel.

The costs associated with the maintenance of PPE are the responsibility of the employer.

\*Employees can be full time, casual, part time or fixed contract.

## Continued...

### What about Storing for PPE - who is responsible for this?

Where PPE is provided, adequate storage facilities for PPE must be provided for when it is not in use, unless the employee may take PPE away from the workplace (e.g. footwear or clothing).

Accommodation may be simple (e.g. pegs for waterproof clothing or safety helmets) and it need not be fixed (e.g. a case for safety glasses or a container in a vehicle).

Storage should be adequate to protect the PPE from contamination, loss, damage, damp or sunlight.

Where PPE may become contaminated during use, storage should be separate from any storage provided for ordinary clothing.

### I lost or broke my PPE what do I do?

If you lose or break your PPE you must contact your supervisor immediately. When considering arrangements for providing replacement PPE it must be remembered that unless a task requiring PPE can be stopped, avoided or delayed until new PPE is obtained, replacement PPE must always be readily available. If PPE was lost or broken due to horseplay or carelessness, its replacement costs can be negotiated between the employer and employee. However, regardless of these arrangements, it is still management responsibility to ensure the provision of correct PPE when required.

### The supply and provision of PPE is the responsibility of the employer, then what are the duties of employees?

Employees should take reasonable steps to ensure that PPE provided is properly used. Employees responsibilities include:

- PPE must be worn and used in accordance with the instructions provided to them.
- Employees must take all reasonable steps to ensure that PPE is returned to the accommodation provided for it after it has been used (unless the employee may take PPE away from the workplace e.g. footwear or clothing).
- PPE must be examined before use.
- Any loss or obvious defect must be immediately reported to their supervisor .
- Employees must take reasonable care for any PPE provided to them and not carry out any maintenance unless trained and authorised.

### We often have contractors onsite, whose responsibility is it to provide and ensure they wear PPE?

Contractors, including those who are self-employed, have a duty to obtain and use the appropriate PPE wherever there is a risk to their health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled by alternative measures. The only exception to this is for those who are classified as self-employed for tax reasons, but who otherwise work in an employee-employer relationship. In this case it will be for the employer to provide suitable PPE.

As discussed in the previous newsletter, if you contract or sub-contract anyone then you are responsible for their safety. If they have no PPE then you should request they cease work until they are properly equipped or you may provide them with sufficient and correct PPE so they may complete the task.

### We sometimes have volunteers and unpaid workers onsite, do we need to give them PPE?

Yes. The 2002 amendment to the HSE act provided protection to volunteers, persons on the job training/work experience and employees on loan. (You could also include visitors). They should be given PPE when and where required. You are responsible for their health & safety while they are on your worksite.



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*...Where a worksite has significant hazards that could result in harm to an employee, the employer must provide suitable protective equipment and/or suitable personal protective clothing at NO COST to the employee...*

## Contact us, if you have any other questions

The questions above are regular queries that are asked regarding the use and supply of PPE. If you have any additional questions please call us on 0800 446 829 or email your account manager.

## Government confirms new cell phone rule - November 1, 2009

From November 1 it will be against the road rules for drivers to text or talk on a handheld cell phone while driving. The change is part of the Land Transport (Road User) Amendment Rule and will see drivers using handheld mobile phones receive an infringement notice consisting of an \$80 fine and 20 demerit points.

Drivers will still be able to use hands-free devices and two-way radio under the ban. There would also be an exemption for 111 calls made for genuine emergencies.

The Road User Rule also includes a requirement for motorcyclists and moped riders to operate headlights during daylight hours. The number of motorcycle crashes has increased rapidly in recent years as motorcycle usage has grown in popularity again. This requirement will help to ensure that motorcyclists are visible to other road users.

We suggest that you update your 'Vehicle Policy' in your Health & Safety Manuals to adhere to these changes.

Below are two update suggestions for cell phone use in work vehicles:

1. The use of cell phones (including hands-free phones) while driving is dangerous. Before making or answering a phone call, drivers must pull over to the side of the road (when it is safe to do so).
2. Cell phone use (including hands-free) is strongly discouraged while driving. Staff must comply with the ban of cell phone use while driving:
  - Turn off your cell phone or divert to voicemail when driving (and check messages when it is safe to pull over).
  - Do not make calls, pick up voicemail, or text message while driving.
  - Pull over to the side of the road when it is safe, before making or answering a call.

### Report Reminder:

The regular reports you receive from us are to help you in your HSE compliance. Your outstanding actions report shows your health & safety related tasks and actions that should be completed in a certain period. Such tasks may include when someone's training expires, when items need testing and tagging or if an incident requires any corrective actions etc. Your other registers are connected to this report hence why you will be required to complete chemical, plant, vehicle and employee registers at least bi-monthly. If you are struggling to complete and return the reports before their due date then email or call your account manager to discuss whether it is advantageous to change the frequency of the reports.

### E-A-Rsoft Yellow Neon Disposable Ear plugs:

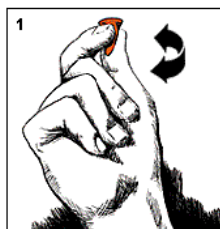
As this month's newsletter discussed PPE, we thought we would send ear plugs to everyone! We purchased our earplugs from the very helpful team at Armour Safety. We've included a business card with their contact details. Instructions are on the right.

## Re-Launch of our online survey site

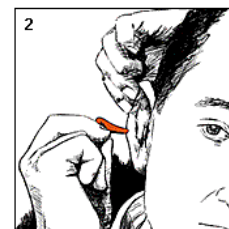
Customer service, improvement, and your satisfaction are important to us so we are re-launching our online survey site from September 7th. Let us know how you feel about our service and then go into a prize draw to win a goodie basket. The draw is limited to one entry per person and the winner will be drawn on November 5th and notified by phone.

Watch your email inboxes for more details!

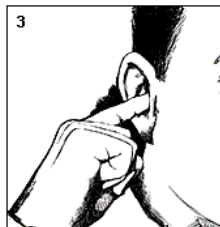
### FITTING INSTRUCTIONS DISPOSABLE FOAM EAR PLUGS



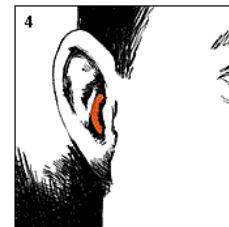
With clean hands, hold ear plug between thumb and forefinger as shown. Roll and progressively compress the entire ear plug to a small crease-free cylinder.



To insure proper fitting, reach hand over head and gently pull ear upward and outward, as shown. Insert compressed, rounded end of ear plug well into ear canal.



Hold 10-20 seconds until ear plug expands. Release, then push again for 5 seconds to insure fit.



Entire ear plug, except flange, should be inside ear canal.