

## Workshop C – The Good, the bad and the ugly of PPE

ICE Health Summit 22 January 2018

Alan Murray CEO BSIF

**Personal protective equipment** is designed to keep employees safe every day at work, often seen as the last line of defence preventing injury or death or ill health and often forming the most reasonably practicable control measure in managing hazards in a workplace.

The workshop objectives were to draw out the needs of SMEs in relation to product and services around PPE and to gain insight into desired innovation in PPE, to assist in continuing improvements in health management in the construction industry.

The workshop was designed to identify what delegates want from their PPE and how PPE manufacturers can react to real life situations and provide meaningful solutions. It was also planned to report examples of PPE not performing as it should, and show delegates how they could source quality product from capable suppliers through the Registered Safety Supplier Scheme, members of which have products that they have placed on the market tested by BSIF..

In the opening session Alan showed a box of filtering face pieces which had been given to a Face Fit Tester in the previous 10 days to face fit employees in an organisation. The face fit tester had identified that these did not meet the requirement of the relevant EN standard. He reported this to BSIF and when they followed up with the Testing Authority stated on the equipment it transpired that they had not tested these half masks.

People in the workshops were generally unaware that there was counterfeit and illegal PPE on sale in the UK, either being sold 'face to face' or electronically. One person asked how big a problem it was. Alan stated that 15% of the PPE tested by BSIF as part of the RSSS failed. Alan drew delegates attention to the HSE's RPE Surveillance Report on RPE which had identified some problems in filtering face pieces on the market in the UK. He also reported on the cases of Poundworld and Jewson showing footage of a hard hat failing badly under the standard test. In a conversation about

the differing levels of fines between Jewson and Poundworld, Alan identified that the courts had taken one under “proceeds of crime” and the clawback of profits created a higher fine.

Alan also reported on other PPE that had been brought to the attention of BSIF and that for this reason BSIF had produced a checklist that employers could use when buying PPE. One delegate resolved to go back to his workplace and instigate a quality control process on his PPE. Another delegate resolved to check where they were getting their PPE from. Other delegates stated that it can be difficult deciding which mask to select, especially on deciding which ffp factor to choose on RPE. When asked, Alan identified that advice should be sought from the employers competent advisor whether that be in house or external and confirmed that suppliers were not able to make a choice of PPE for employers, that was the employers obligation.

There was a broad conversation on face fit testing which confirmed that it was a statutory requirement for employers to show that their respiratory protective equipment was effective for individual workers. Alan confirmed that the face fit tester should give broad instruction about how to don the RPE but that this was not a substitute for employers ensuring training was carried out. Delegates identified that often workers turned up without the correct RPE, as identified in their RAMS and that there was a general problem with workers being clean shaven.

The broader conversation covered questions about availability, including gender specific PPE and the question of the amount of stock that an organisation would need to hold, especially in relation to RPE, where ‘one size’ does not fit all. This led to a discussion about why there was so much reliance of PPE. The view was that this was driven by designers who did not design out activities that created hazards, e.g. block cutting and that for employers PPE was a cheaper fix than introducing and enforcing other control measures, albeit that it was acknowledged that enforcing the appropriate use of PPE can be a challenge. This topic was explored in more depth and delegates identified that part of the problem was the unthinking requirement to wear 5 point PPE rather than deciding what was relevant to the tasks being undertaken. It was felt that this led to high volume use which encouraged people to buy on a cost basis, rather than a specification basis.



## Workshop C

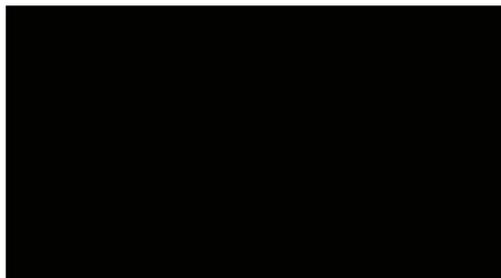
The Good the Bad and the Ugly of PPE

Alan Murray

CEO British Safety Industry Federation

# A Last Line of Defence

Head .....to..... Toe



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# Safety linking to Health with PPE

Respiratory Protection } Health Outcomes  
Hearing Protection }

[..Fit2Fit\RR1087 RESPIRATORS DISPOSABLE FFP3 MARKET SURVEILLANCE.pdf](#)

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## Market Surveillance of PPE



BSiF runs the Registered Safety Supplier Scheme which involves product quality auditing and education of client facing staff  
BSiF has Primary Authority with Trading Standards

Delivering **Quality** and **Capability** in the PPE supply chain

[www.registeredsafetysupplierscheme.co.uk](http://www.registeredsafetysupplierscheme.co.uk)

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### What do you want from your PPE and your PPE suppliers



- Expectations of products
- Expectations on advice and support
- Expectations on capability and qualification
- Expectation on additional services

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## Potential issues slide

*Product that is fit for purpose*

*Capability of “suppliers” to provide advice*

*Clean shaven issue*

*Brexit – Product standards*

*Woman’s styles*

*Market Surveillance and product integrity*

*New PPE Regulation*

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