

# GAP Tool Box Talk: Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)



# What is PPE?

- PPE is equipment or clothing worn to protect the user against health or safety risks at work
- PPE is used as a last resort after other control measures.

In the construction industry the most common items of PPE worn are:

- Safety helmets
- Safety footwear
- High visibility clothing



## Other examples of PPE include:

- Safety harnesses
- Ear defenders
- Protective gloves clothing
- Respirators
- Goggles



# All employers have duties concerning the provision and use of PPE at work

The regulation that applies is:

## The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992

The regulations require any employer to:

- Supply PPE
- Ensure that it is used at work wherever the risks to Health & Safety cannot be adequately controlled in other ways

## It is also required that PPE is:

- Properly assessed before use (suitability)
- Maintained and stored properly
- Provided with instructions on how to use it safely
- Used correctly by employees



**SAFETY**

# Training

- Make sure anyone using PPE is aware of why it is needed and remind employees:
  - When it is to be used
  - When it should be repaired
  - When it should be replaced
  - Of its limitations
- PPE is the last resort and should not be used to replace other methods of control, always ensure that employees wear the PPE supplied for the job
- Always check that the PPE is being used and is suitable to the task
- Ensure safety signs are in place to remind all employees of the need to wear PPE

# What must the employer do?

- Assess the risks to employees' health and safety arising from work activities
- Try to organise work activities so that PPE is not necessary
- State where PPE is necessary
- Ensure that the selected PPE suits the wearer and items are made to the required standard
- Supply employees with necessary PPE at no cost
- Instruct / train employees on its use and explain any limitations where necessary
- Ensure compatibility where more than one piece of PPE is worn
- Ensure that all PPE is maintained where appropriate
- Replace defective or lost PPE as required at no cost to the user
- Supply PPE which is marked with 'CE' and complies

## What must the employee do?

- Use the PPE in accordance with instructions / training given
- Return PPE to its accommodation where provided after use
- Take reasonable care of your PPE
- Report any defects or loss to your employer
- Always wear the PPE supplied for the task



## Some KEY points to remember:

Are there ways (other than PPE) in which the risks can be suitably controlled?

If not, check that:

- PPE is provided
- It offers adequate protection for its intended use
- Those using it are adequately trained / instructed in its safe use
- It is properly maintained and any defects are reported
- It is returned to its proper storage after use

**PPE CAN SAVE LIVES, USE IT PROPERLY AND LOOK AFTER IT AS YOU WOULD WANT IT TO LOOK AFTER YOU**