

PPE Checklist

Are you sure that your personal protective equipment (PPE) is legal, compliant and therefore safe to be used in your workplace?

In the UK there are an increasing number of reported cases of non-compliant and, by definition, illegal items of PPE being placed on the market. Counterfeit PPE is also on the increase, with well established product brands or designs being the primary target. The issue of counterfeit and illegal products is a serious one in that often these products do not perform as they should, endangering lives and exposing an organisation to risk of prosecution.

To help combat this ever increasing problem, the British Safety Industry Federation (BSIF) has created the Registered Safety Supplier Scheme (RSSS). Companies displaying the scheme's shield have signed a binding declaration that the safety equipment they offer meets the appropriate product performance standards, is fully compliant with the PPE Directive and is therefore legally carrying the CE mark.



Confidence through Compliance

All Registered Safety Suppliers are independently audited to confirm compliance with the scheme's requirements. A full list of registered companies is available at www.bsif.co.uk

What is PPE?

Defined in Europe by Directive 89/686/EEC (The PPE Directive), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is an item held or worn by an individual that protects against one or more hazards.

Common examples of PPE include:

- Safety footwear
- Chemical protective clothing
- Eye protection
- Respiratory protective equipment
- Welding protection
- Fall arrest harnesses
- Safety helmets (i.e. hard hats)
- High-visibility clothing
- Hand protection

All items of PPE that are placed on the European market are obliged to carry the CE mark and therefore must fulfil numerous basic health and safety requirements laid down by the PPE Directive.

How easy is it to spot counterfeit or illegal PPE?

Did you know that one of the basic health and safety requirements is that all PPE must be supplied with instructions for use?

Did you know that it is a legal requirement for PPE products to not only carry the CE mark but for the mark itself to be $\geq 5\text{mm}$?

In reality, even for PPE experts, it can be difficult without destructive testing to identify whether or not a product is compliant and meets required performance standards.

To assist specifiers and users of PPE to spot potentially non-compliant product, experts from within the BSIF membership have created the following easy-to-use checklist. A copy of which is available to download from www.bsif.co.uk

Checklist	Yes	No
Is the CE mark present on the product marking/labelling?		
If present on the product, is the CE mark in the correct font and at least 5mm high?		
For high risk products, including respirators and chemical protective clothing, is the CE mark accompanied by a 4-digit number? (E.g. CE 0120)		
Were written instructions for use provided with the product?		
Are the instructions for use printed in clear and legible text*?		
Are the instructions for use written in at least English*?		
Is the name and address of the manufacturer detailed on the user instructions?		

*It is a requirement of the PPE Directive that the instructions for use are precise, comprehensible and provided at least in the official language(s) of the Member State of destination (i.e. the country in which the product is sold).

If you answered "No" to one or more of the questions then you should immediately contact your PPE supplier for advice. As a minimum the supplier of the product should be able to provide you with an EC Declaration of Conformity or EC-Type Examination Certificate for the specific product in question.

If you are still uncertain about the products legal status or performance capability, why not give the team at the BSIF a call on 01442 248744 and they will do their best to help.