



Maritime and Coastguard Agency

WORKING AND PROTECTIVE GEAR FOR FISHERMEN

Notice to all Designers, Builders, Owners, Employers, Skippers and Crew Members of Fishing Vessels

This notice should be read in conjunction with MSN1731 (M+F) for details of technical standards and MGN 20 (M+F) and supersedes MGN 237(F).

Summary

This Note provides general advice on the supply and use of working gear and protective gear (personal protective equipment (PPE)) on board fishing vessels. It includes advice on the application to fishing vessels on the principal requirements of the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Personal Protective Equipment) Regulations 1999.

- Protective gear (or PPE) should only be used where acceptable levels of risk cannot be eliminated. Elimination of hazards identified by risk assessment is a primary objective.
- Advice is provided to help decide when and which protective gear (or PPE) can be used for dealing with risks that commonly occur on board.
- Annexes 1 and 2 provide examples of protective gear checklists that can be kept readily available for the information of crewmembers.
- This note may be used to meet requirements for information and training as required by articles 7, 8, 9 and 10 of European Council Directive 93/103/EC.

1 Introduction

1.1 This Note provides general advice on the supply and use of working gear and protective gear (personal protective equipment (PPE)) on board fishing vessels. It includes advice on the application to fishing vessels on the principal requirements of the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Personal Protective Equipment) Regulations 1999.

2 What the owner should do to assess the need for protective gear

2.1 There are four stages that the owner should go through to assess the need for protective gear, as follows:

A – As part of an overall risk assessment consider the use of working gear and protective gear. Use this to identify those risks that can only be addressed by the use of such equipment.

B – Decide on what the gear must be capable of to address the risks identified (in A). Make sure you take into account any problems that a particular type or design of gear may create.

C – Compare to ensure that the gear considered in B addresses the risks identified in A. Consult with crewmembers to make the final choice of design and type of gear and to ensure that the gear is effective.

D – Inform all crewmembers of the working gear and protective gear that should be available and worn under those circumstances identified (in A). Checklists similar to those in the Annexes to this MGN may be applied.

N.B. Protective gear should always be looked on as a safety measure of last resort. It should only be used when you cannot remove the safety risk completely or reduce it to a safe level by more effective means. e.g. It is better if work can be performed under a protective shelter than to address the risk of crew working on deck. The main aim should always be to remove or contain the source of harm so that everyone is protected, not just those wearing protective gear.

3 Categories of Protective Gear

3.1 What fishermen wear for their own protection can be split into three groups:

- Working Gear
- Protective Gear
- Specialist Protective Gear

paragraphs 3.2 to 3.4 provide guidelines on what can be considered as meeting these 3 groups.

3.2 Working Gear

This includes those items of personal clothing that, by reason of practicality, share fishermen usually supply for their own use, inclusive of oilskins, overalls and working boots. They can have important features giving protection from slips and falls, wet and cold, additional buoyancy, compatibility with other protective equipment (such as constant wear lifejackets) and aids to being seen and colour contrast with the marine environment.

3.3 Protective Gear

This includes additional items that the employer or owner supplies (such as eye protection and buoyancy equipment), after having identified the need through risk assessment.

3.4 Specialist Protective Gear

This is specialist equipment requiring formal training and greater familiarity before it can be used safely. This includes such items as oxygen meters and breathing apparatus used for entry into enclosed spaces. Without such equipment and proper training such risks are to be avoided. Delay tasks requiring specialist equipment until they can be carried out safely by specialist contractors when in port.

4 Summary for Supply, Use and Maintenance of Working and Protective Gear

4.1 When supplying, using or maintaining working and protective gear, it is important that the following is taken into account:

- The choice of working and protective gear should be based on the findings of a risk assessment. Refer to MGN 20 (M+F) for details;
- Outer clothing or clothing worn over clothing should be in bright colours, contrasting with the marine environment and clearly visible; Information on what working gear and protective gear is needed should be available to all on board, (such as in the examples shown in the Annexes);
- Gear should comply with relevant standards of design and manufacture (e.g. new equipment should carry the British Standard or European Norm (CE) marking appropriate for the intended use. See MSN 1731(M+F) for detailed technical standards);
- Gear should be appropriate to the risks identified, the working environment and should fit, or be adjustable to fit, the individual wearing it;
- Gear should be stored, inspected, maintained and repaired so that it remains effective, and should be accessible;
- Instructions for use should always be available, and workers instructed or trained in the proper use of the equipment;
- The skipper and the owner should ensure that the proper working gear and protective gear is used when the risks demand it;
- Where gear is not supplied for an individual's sole use, it must be kept in a hygienic condition so that it can be shared safely;
- Fishermen should wear and use the working gear and protective gear when appropriate and comply with any training and instruction provided.

5 Regulations

5.1 MSN 1731 (M+F) outlines the requirements of the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Personal Protective Equipment) Regulations 1999. It also contains an expanded list of work activities and relevant design standards of protective equipment. The regulations require employers to ensure that personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided for workers who are engaged in, or at risk from, a hazardous working activity on board United Kingdom fishing vessels.

Further Information

Further information on the contents of this Notice can be obtained from:

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**Annex 1- For Crew of Smaller Fishing Vessels (Under 24 metres Registered Length)
A Guide to Personal Working Gear and Protective Gear for Fishermen – Basic Checklist to Protect Against Injury ***

ACTIVITY	LOCATION	WORKING GEAR					PROTECTIVE GEAR							SPECIALIST PROTECTION	
		Oilskins (and partial)	Boiler Suit	Work Boots	Gloves	Hard Hat	Ear Protection	Safety line/Harness	Lifejacket/Buoyancy Equipment	Safety Goggles	Rubber gloves/ Apron	Insulated Jacket & trousers	Breathing Apparatus	Oxygen Meter	
Fishing Watch	Working deck	●	●	■	●	■									
Any	Engine Room		■	■	●	●	■								
Any	Aloft	●	●	■	■	■		●							
Any	Outboard	●		■	■	●		●							
Grinding & cutting	Engine Room		■	■	■	●			■						
Grinding & cutting	Working deck		■	■	■	●			■						
Exposed work Including Shooting and hauling	Working deck	■	■	■	■	■		●	■						
Mooring	Working deck			■	■	■			■						
Stowage/ handling	Fish Room			■	■	■									
Stowage	Refrigerated Fish Room			■	■	●									
Battery maintenance	Engine Room		■	■	■	●			■	■					
Battery maintenance	Wheelhouse		■	■	■	●			■	■					
Loading/un-loading Fish Boxes & lifting Gear	Working deck			■	■	■									
Any	Enclosed space			■									■		
Vessel maintenance	Inside			■										●	
	Outside			■		■								●	

* You may find this checklist helpful in considering what you need to do to protect against injury in hazardous situations. It may also help you to comply with regulations. MSN 1731 (M+ F) identifies a fuller range of work activities, the PPE required and sets out the standards required for those items of protective clothing.

- means a high priority item/essential
- means a priority dependant upon the local circumstances and the location

Annex 2 – For Crew of Larger Fishing Vessels (24 metres Registered Length and Over)
A Guide to Personal Working Gear and Protective Gear for Fishermen – Basic Checklist to Protect Against Injury *

ACTIVITY	LOCATION	WORKING GEAR						PROTECTIVE GEAR						SPECIALIST PROTECTION	
		Oilskins (and partial)	Boiler Suit	Work Boots	Gloves	Hard Hat	Ear Protection	Safety line/Harness	Lifejacket/Buoyancy Equipment	Safety Goggles	Rubber gloves/Apron	Insulated Jacket & trousers	Breathing Apparatus	Oxygen Meter	
Fishing Watch	Working deck	●	●	■	●	■									
Any	Engine Room		■	■	■	†	■								
Any	Aloft	●		■	■	■		●							
Any	Outboard	●		■	■	■		●							
Grinding & cutting	Engine Room		■	■	■	†	■								
Grinding & cutting	Working deck			■	■	■	■	●	■						
Exposed work Including Shooting and hauling	Working deck	●		■	■	■	■	●	■						
Mooring	Working deck		●	■	■	■	■	■							
Stowage/ handling	Fish Room			■	■	■	■								
Stowage	Refrigerated Fish Room	●		■	■	■	■								
Battery maintenance	Engine Room		■	■	■	†	■		■						
Battery maintenance	Wheelhouse		●	■	■	●	■		■						
Loading/un-loading Fish Boxes & lifting Gear	Working deck	●	●	■	■	■	■								
Any	Enclosed space		●	■	●	●	●							■	■
Vessel maintenance	Inside			■	■	■	■								
Vessel maintenance	Outside			■	■	■	■								

* You may find this checklist helpful in considering what you need to do to protect against injury in hazardous situations. It may also help you to comply with regulations. MSN 1731 (M + F) identifies a fuller range of work activities, the PPE required and sets out the standards required for those items of protective clothing.

- means a high priority item/essential
- means a priority dependant upon the local circumstances and the location
- † means, " or a bump cap" as a high priority /essential