



BUSINESS PLAN

CEN/TC 160

PROTECTION AGAINST FALLS FROM A HEIGHT INCLUDING WORKING BELTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Business environment

Products

- Personal fall arresting systems and components
- Personal equipment for working belts and accessories
- Harnesses and safety lines for use on sporting boats
- Rescue equipment

Application sectors

- Working environment
- Leisure activities
- Rescue activities

Parties involved

- Manufacturers
- Test laboratories
- Government safety organizations
- Consumers

Benefits

European Standards developed by CEN/TC 160:

- Remove barriers to trade in Europe
- Provide a high level of safety for PPE throughout Europe
- Support European legislation.

Priorities

To make European standards available and keep updated related to:

- Confidence of consumers and professional users
- Strengthening of the legal certainty for the manufacturer

1 BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT OF THE CEN/TC 160

1.1 Description of the Business Environment

The following political, economic, technical, regulatory, legal, societal and/or international dynamics describe the business environment of the industry sector, products, materials, disciplines or practices related to the scope of this CEN/TC, and they may significantly influence how the relevant standards development processes are conducted and the content of the resulting standards:

Fields of application

Personal protective equipment (PPE) against fall from a height and other personal fall protection equipment is mainly used in workplaces (e.g. window cleaning, maintenance activities, forestry), for leisure activities (e.g. sailing) and rescue activities.

Legal factors

The following EC Directive is especially relevant to PPE against falls from a height:

Council Directive **89/686/EEC** of 21 December 1989 concerning the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to PPE (amended by Directives 93/95/EEC; 93/68/EEC and 96/58/EEC).

This directive specifies the conditions governing the placing on the market of PPE and defines essential health and safety requirements (see Annex 2 of 89/686/EEC).

Harmonized standards delineate the parameters for compliance with the requirements of the directive and are thus designed to eliminate trade barriers in the European Union.

Standardization on the basis of directive 89/686/EEC is supported by the European Union. The work of CEN/TC 160 is covered by Mandates/Order Vouchers concerning standards for personal protective equipment:

- M/BC/CEN/88/11
- M/BC/CEN/90/2
- M/BC/CEN/031/93/30
- M/CEN/307.

Standards for PPE against falls from a height as developed under the PPE directive 89/686/EEC and listed as harmonized standards in the Official Journal of the European Commission (OJEC) give the presumption of conformity. That implies that products manufactured in accordance with such standards comply with the requirements of the directive. Thus the manufacturers may refer to European Standards developed by CEN/TC 160 for certification purposes. Furthermore, the standards may also give assurance as to the usability of products for the intended purpose.

International aspects

In the field of personal fall protection equipment there is a remarkable international activity in standardization. CEN/TC 160 cooperates with ISO/TC 94/SC 4 "Personal equipment for protection against falls", even if standardisation work is not carried out under the Vienna Agreement.

Interested parties

Interested parties in the standardization process are the PPE producing industry, either by direct representation or through manufacturers' associations, the consumers/users represented by consumer organizations, social security institutions, government safety organizations and representatives of test laboratories and notified bodies.

1.2 Quantitative Indicators of the Business Environment

The following quantitative indicators describe the business environment in order to provide adequate information to support actions of the CEN /TC:

Health and safety precautions necessitate the use of PPE against falls from a height in a large number of workplaces and leisure time activities. PPE against falls from a height has to comply with the requirements of the PPE Directive 89/686/EEC, which presents the basis for standardization work in the field.

Examples of products for which standards of CEN/TC 160 are available:

- Full body harnesses
- Sit harnesses
- Guided-type fall arresters
- Work positioning systems
- Working belts
- Descender devices
- Energy absorbers
- Connectors
- Lanyards
- Rescue equipment
- Anchor devices.

An overall and comprehensive estimate of the sales value of products in the field of PPE against falls from a height for all EU Member States cannot currently be given, since reliable statistics are not readily available.

Accident statistics show that more than 30% of all occupational accidents are related to falls from a height. Costs arising from such accidents go beyond € 1 billion each year. The use of PPE against falls from a height can help to reduce the number of fall accidents and the severity of injuries. If the equipment is correctly employed, the occurrence of fatal accidents can be almost totally excluded.

2 BENEFITS EXPECTED FROM THE WORK OF THE CEN/TC 160

Technical and economic factors

The technical factors influencing the elaboration and revision of standards for personal fall protection equipment are based in particular on the following developments:

- Advances in the materials used
- Further development of legislation in the field of occupational safety
- Handling and maintenance of PPE by the user
- Potential fields of application.

Standardization in line with these views is seen as a key component of the European market, all the more as standardized specifications and test methods facilitate trade and help to reduce costs of product development and testing.

Medium-sized and small companies that manufacture various products pertaining to the specified standards of CEN/TC 160, have the opportunity to draw on the knowledge of the standards for their manufacturing processes, although they may not be directly involved in the standardization process itself. All have a vested interest in a set of standards that creates a terminology for the industry sector, defines commonly valid product requirements for personal fall protection equipment and describes the relevant test methods and marking requirements.

Political Factors

A contribution towards the improvement of consumer and occupational safety is made through standardisation activities taking account of the New Approach Directive on personal protection equipment (89/686/EEC) and the reinforced representation of consumer rights (see GPSD) by the EU-Commission.

Social factors

The technical committee regards the high level of safety of personal fall protection equipment as a fundamental social factor. The level of safety is ensured by specifications contained in European Standards. The definition of improved ergonomic design and comfortable physiological parameters in the standards can increase the acceptance of personal fall protection equipment. The number of fall accidents and severity of related injuries can be reduced considerably.

Thus, European Standards developed by CEN/TC 160

- Remove barriers to trade in Europe
- Support European legislation, in particular the New Approach Directive 89/686/EEC on PPE
- Provide a high level of safety for PPE throughout Europe, thus leading to cost savings through reduction of the number as well as the severity of accidents both in professional and specific non-professional areas.

3 PARTICIPATION IN THE CEN/TC

All the CEN national members are entitled to nominate delegates to CEN Technical Committees and experts to Working Groups, ensuring a balance of all interested parties. Participation as observers of recognized European or international organizations is also possible under certain conditions.

To participate in the activities of this CEN/TC, please contact the national standards organization in your country.

4 OBJECTIVES OF THE CEN/TC AND STRATEGIES FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENT

4.1 Defined objectives of the CEN/TC 160

The objectives of the TC are:

- Develop standards for requirements and test methods relevant to personal fall protection equipment with regard to the improvement of the performance and ergonomics of products
- Revise the existing European standards in line with the state of the art
- Define future activities with regard to standardization for special applications
- Create a comprehensive structure of standards, taking into consideration standards of related TCs
- Provide for a good information for users in relation to safety and health
- Establish consistent terminology in the area of personal fall protection equipment standards
- Facilitate the application of standards by all interested parties
- Promote further activities in international co-operative standardization.

4.2 Identified strategies to achieve the CEN/TC's defined objectives.

The main set of current standards, standards under revision and in preparation under CEN/TC 160 cover performance requirements and test methods for personal fall protection equipment. Where there are inadequate or inefficient test methods and performance standards for any safety features needed by users, CEN/TC 160 will bring together groups of experts to quantify the need, facilitate the development of test methods and encourage work to establish and improve safety standards.

CEN/TC 160 makes the most efficient use of the available expertise in this individual area. A balanced composition of working groups - i. e. to be widely representative of consumers, manufacturers, test laboratories and commerce - is encouraged.

The standardization work should be based on, and take into account of, all relevant information such as:

- Scientific evidence and reports
- Accident report data
- National activities in the field of personal fall protection equipment
- Standardization results on international level
- Users' experience with complying products.

CEN/TC 160 aims at coordinating its work with other related bodies such as CEN/TC 136/WG 5 (mountaineering equipment), CEN/TC 122/JWG9 (ergonomic design of PPE), CEN/TC 162/JWG 1 (fire fighters' PPE) and CEN/TC 128 (Roof covering products for discontinuous laying and products for wall cladding) etc.

4.3 Environmental aspects

CEN/TC 160 will address environmental issues in its standards if needed.

CEN/TC 160 will also consider environmental issues during the revision of standards and will include environmental provisions if needed.

5 FACTORS AFFECTING COMPLETION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CEN/TC WORK PROGRAMME

The integration of relevant test methods for an improved consideration of ergonomic specifications in the revisions of the TC's standards requires the completion of the guidelines currently drafted by CEN/TC 122/JWG 9.

The harmonization of EN 795 is still under review. The European Commission is currently examining if the standard is to be entirely subordinated to the PPE directive or partly related to the directive of construction products. While CEN/TC 160 is waiting for the Commission's decision on this issue, the technical revision of EN 795 will be carried on.

For a few work items working groups are concerned about difficulties to ensure adequate representation of user groups in meetings.