



The assessment of personal protective equipment in the Czech Republic

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The standardization process in the Czech Republic has got its long-standing tradition as the first standardization organizations were founded about ninety years ago. More than a half a century later, the Czech Republic was the first country from Central and Eastern Europe to join the European Committee for Standardization (Comité Européen de Normalisation) in 1987.

The European Directive No. 89/686/EEC, which contains basic technical requirements for personal protective equipment, was implemented in the Czech Republic in 1997.

The assessment of PPEs has been conducted since the sixties of the last century. The approaches used stemmed from the national standards, the criteria were sometimes stipulated by the testing laboratories as a general rule did not exist. The biggest shortcoming for this period was insufficient scope of the documentation required for an assessment. The aim of assessment, which is a safe product for its user and the environment, has been consistent then and now.

There are seven institutions assessing conformity of PPEs in the Czech Republic. Most of them assess not only personal protective equipment but other products as well.

Accreditation is an indispensable basis for this activity. It is granted by the Czech Accreditation Institute, which is member of the European Accreditation. Meeting the European standards for testing laboratories EN ISO/IEC 17025 and for certification bodies for assessment of products EN 45011 is an imperative condition of authorisation for conformity assessment.

The authorisation procedure is carried out by the Czech Office for Standards, Metrology and Testing. As there is no legal title for accreditation, the office also considers a real need for other authorisation bodies while making the decision. In other words, strict control takes place prior to authorisation. The control result, along with meeting the requirements, means that the Czech authorised bodies are prepared for notification in the European Union.

The Czech bodies authorised for conformity assessment were notified under the PECA Protocol in 2001.