

**Report on the 25th meeting of CEN/TC 160 WG 3
Personal protective equipment for work positioning and the prevention of falls
from a height, held on 08 March 2010 in Haan, Düsseldorf, Germany**

Present

Wolfgang Schäper (Convenor) (D)
Thomas von Hoegen (D) (Secretary)
Susanna Schiemer (A)
Petra Jackisch (D)
Bernard Bressoux (F)
Matthieu Richard (F)
Paul Seddon (UK)

Purpose of the meeting

The main business of the meeting was to address the appeal by the Austrian Standards Institute against the ratification of FprEN 341, which had already passed the formal vote.

Appeal against the ratification of FprEN 341:2009 by the Austrian Standards Institute

At the end of the last meeting of CEN/TC 160/WG 3, three options had been arrived at to try to resolve the Austrian problem (described in the report of the last meeting). After more discussion it was agreed that a way forward would be to modify the latest draft of EN 341 (FprEN 341:2009) as follows:

In 4.2.2.2, the requirement for textile ropes would be modified from having to conform to EN 1891:1998 Type A to having to conform to EN 1891 Type A, clauses 4.1 to 4.10. Effectively, this removed the requirement for a rope used with an EN 341 device to withstand the 5 dynamic tests of 4.11 and the static strength tests of 4.12 in EN 1891, relying instead on the tests carried out in EN 341. This decision would allow the use of specially designed ropes for use with EN 341.

NOTE It is important to remember that a descender device for rescue in accordance with EN 341 includes the descent line, i.e. the descent line is an element of the descender device.

The proposal would be submitted to CEN/TC 160, which would need to ballot its members, i.e. standards bodies such as BSI, DIN, AFNOR. If the proposal were accepted by CEN/TC 160 members, it would then be forwarded to the CEN Technical Board (CEN/BT) for approval.

Clarity issues in FprEN 341 regarding clauses dealing with panic locking functions

Matthieu Richard had again raised the problem associated with the clauses dealing with panic grab functions in FprEN 341. These were not clear and could lead to litigation

difficulties in case of an accident. There had been some sympathy from WG members at the last meeting but as it would be clearly against CEN rules to modify the draft with regard to this point at this stage, it was simply noted.

After further discussion, it was agreed that WG 3 would try to resolve the issue and at least minute any solutions found. In fact, a solution was found. It was agreed that WG 3 should submit the proposal, along with the solution to the Austrian problem, to CEN/TC 160 and its members, and eventually to CEN/BT to see if the proposals could be accepted at this stage. If they could not be accepted (because of procedural irregularities), at least the problem and solutions would be recorded in the minutes and these minutes could be used in case of any inappropriate litigation.

The problem was solved by adding two definitions to FprEN 341 and slightly modifying the wording of 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.4.3, 5.4.4 and Annex A. All these changes were proposed purely for clarity and were thus editorial, rather than technical.

The two definitions were for *panic locking element* and *control device*. These definitions already existed in EN 12841 and ISO 22159. They were slightly modified to suit the style of FprEN 341 and adopted as follows:

panic locking element

integral part or function of the control device, which stops or slows down the descent and thereby prevents an uncontrolled descent or a fall if the user panics and operates the descender device beyond its intended control parameters

control device

integral element of the descender device normally operated by hand to control the velocity of descent down the line

The other minor changes related to references in the draft which stated: *...when the control device is in a hands-off or any panic-grab position*. This was changed to: *...when the control device is in a hands-off position or, if applicable, a panic locking element is engaged*.

Review of EN 1891, Low stretch kernmantel ropes

It was decided not to pursue the idea of including a very low stretch rope in any revision of EN 1891 and that the best way to address this would be to produce a standard in its own right, if indeed the need for such a standard existed.

Next meeting

No meeting was arranged.

Paul Seddon
09 March 2010