



Acheta Risk Assessment for Workplace Footwear

Guidance taken from the HSE publication 'A short guide to the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992'

Feet and legs

Options: safety boots and shoes with protective toe caps and penetration-resistant mid-sole, gaiters, leggings, spats.

Guidance taken from the HSE website:

- Footwear can play an important part in preventing slips and trips.
- In work situations where floors can't be kept dry or clean e.g. food preparation, the right footwear will be especially important, so a slip resistant shoe may be required. If an employer introduces a slip resistant shoe policy, the footwear will be considered to be personal protective equipment and will be subject to the requirements of the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations e.g. will have to be provided to employees free of charge.
- Choosing the most suitable slip-resistant footwear for a particular environment / work activity can be difficult. Descriptions of slip-resistance given in suppliers brochures range from 'improving the grip performance' to 'excellent multi-directional slip-resistance', but often do not describe the work environments for which footwear are, or are not, suitable.

HSE provide the following guidance concerning selection of the most appropriate footwear:

- Undertake a footwear trial before buying sufficient stock for your entire workforce.
- Footwear can perform differently in different situations. For example, footwear that performs well in wet conditions might not be suitable where there are food spillages.
- A good tread pattern is essential on fluid-contaminated surfaces. The pattern is characterised by, among other things, leading edges in all directions to sweep away lubricant leaving dry contact under cleats.
- Sole tread patterns should not become clogged with any waste or debris on the floor. If they do then that design of sole is unsuitable for the situation.
- Sole material type and hardness are key factors; caution is needed in making generalisations and testing is always recommended.
- When choosing footwear take into account factors such as comfort, durability and any additional safety features required, such as steel mid-sole. The final choice may have to be a compromise.

The Acheta footwear policy

Based on the HSE's guidance, and many years experience of working in the food industry, all Acheta employees are issued with safety footwear. All footwear has a slip coefficient which significantly exceeds British Standard requirements.

All boots conform to the safety standard EN ISO 20345:2004 (Basic requirements) with a minimum 200J tested toecap (coded SB), a protected penetration resistant midsole and a slip coefficient tested sole. The slip resistance should be a minimum of SRA rated (tested on ceramic tile wetted with dilute soap solution).

The generic site risk assessment applicable to all of our inspection work states that slips, trips and falls are the major cause of accidents amongst our client base, and that all employees must wear footwear provided by the Company at all times when carrying out inspection work. Footwear should be replaced when the tread becomes insufficient to provide a good level of grip.

Captive footwear

Sites requiring the use of captive footwear present a difficult challenge to the Company. Employees must make their own judgment as to the suitability of the footwear provided, and the nature of the site will play a part in that decision. Sites where the footwear will be worn all day, and with slippery floors and numerous stairs or fixed vertical ladders, will demand a different type of footwear from a small site with dry floors and no stairs or ladders. Factors to be taken into consideration are:

- Condition and safety rating; is the footwear clean and in good condition, and does it bear a recognised safety mark?
- Boots vs shoes; a level of ankle support is considered highly desirable for the work that we carry out, and shoes should only be accepted for relatively straightforward sites where the risk of turned ankles is considered minimal.
- Sole protection; as well as the required steel toe-cap, does the footwear have a metal plate in the mid-sole? This is required against potential puncture from below, and footwear should be rejected if it does not have this feature.
- Tread pattern; does the footwear have a tread of adequate width and depth for the conditions likely to be encountered?
- Laces vs slip-ons; Slip-ons should not be used except for jobs of very short duration in sites with no significant slip or trip risks.

If the employee considers that the captive footwear provided is inadequate to meet the safety demands of the inspection then they should highlight this to site personnel and provide them with a copy of this risk assessment, requesting that the site health and safety representative be made aware of this.

If the site is unable or unwilling to provide appropriate footwear then the ultimate recourse is to refuse to carry out the inspection until suitable footwear is provided. This must be regarded as the final option, but anyone taking this decision will have the full support of the Company.

Signed:



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