

ETUC standardisation newsletter - September 2020

Dear colleagues and friends,

The ETUC is pleased to send you its newsletter on standardisation that will keep you regularly updated on the ETUC's activities in the field of standardisation. It will deliver information on European and international standardisation direct to your desktop. If you wish additional information and/or documents related to the news mentioned below, feel free to contact us at standards@etuc.org.

New ETUC Study published: The impact of standard in the world of work

The role of international and European standards in shaping the world of work in the European service sector

[READ THE REPORT](#)

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The ETUC published a new study that looks into the [“Role of international and European standards in shaping the world of work in the European Service sector”](#).

Service standards can, under certain circumstances, benefit working conditions and social dialogue. Such benefits include the influence that service standards have in providing a level playing field, for instance in training opportunities or privacy at work, for workers and their environment.

Yet, significant evidence exists regarding the potential pitfalls of service standards affecting workers. Observed pitfalls refer to service standards setting requirements that contradict existing labour laws and collective agreements, or lead to inferior working conditions.

The study gives recommendations on how to make better standards by:

- Being aware of standards,
- Being there when standards are written,
- Following the standards and embedding them in social dialogue!

The [ETUC Leaflet 'The impact of standards on the world of work in Europe'](#) summarises the recommendations as well as the benefits and pitfalls.



The CEN Workshop Agreement on “community face coverings” is published



In the light of the coronavirus outbreak in Europe, the European Commission asked the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) to develop a new CEN Workshop Agreement (CWA) on *community face coverings*.

The new CWA 17553:2020 'Community face coverings - Guide to minimum requirements, methods of testing and use' provides the minimum requirements for the design, production and performance assessment of community face coverings (barrier masks), single or reusable, intended for consumers.

Barrier masks are intended for use by people not displaying any clinical symptoms of viral or bacterial infection and who do not come into contact with people displaying such symptoms. The masks specified in this document are not categorised as medical devices Regulations (93/42/CEE and/or EU/2017/745). The ETUC welcomes the fact that community face coverings are not part of the personal protective equipment (PPE) as defined in Regulation EU/2016/425.

Earlier, CEN made freely available a list of [11 European standards \(ENs\) for medical devices and personal protective equipment used in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

Standards on maintenance engineering and safety in the pipeline



The right focus of maintenance engineering can contribute to improved maintenance management and also the improvement of health, safety and work environment. CEN/Technical Committee 319 'Maintenance' has therefore started work on a new standard on *maintenance engineering*. The new work, which is titled 'Maintenance engineering – Requirements', kicked off in April. The main target group of the standard is personnel involved in design, procurement, construction, operation, improvement, maintenance and retirement (decommissioning) of items and physical assets.

The Technical Committee also laid down the first steps towards writing a standard to control risks related to energies and fluids during maintenance operations. The work is carried out in the newly set up Working Group 15 'Maintenance safety'.

The ETUC participates in both groups. Should you wish to receive more information, or provide input, please do not hesitate to contact the ETUC Secretariat, kbehnke@etuc.org.

ETUC comments on the European Commission's draft Annual Union Work Programme (AUWP) on Standardisation

During the early summer months, the draft Annual Union Work Programme (AUWP) on standardisation for 2021 was out for consultation. This [programme](#) is prepared by the European Commission and identifies priorities for European standardisation. It sets out the specific objectives and policies for European standards and standardisation deliverables in the next year. It also lists the type of actions the Commission intends to undertake.

The ETUC submitted its input, which included the request for inclusion of medical treatment tables (physiotherapy practices, hospitals) with electric height adjustment, which are not covered by the latest version of the Standardisation Request.

In 2016 and 2017 two workers were trapped beneath such tables, suffering fatal injuries. Further accidents are known to have been incurred by workers, patients and children suffering crushing or fractures or in some cases death. There is no European standard for these products. A German standard is under development. In order to make treatment tables safer throughout the EU, we believe a European standard on medical treatment tables will be a good start.

We need better protection of persons and equipment against enclosures



Housing of machines as well as products, such as fans, must be designed in such a way that a worker's finger does not come into contact with dangerous mechanical or electrical parts. This is tested with a standardised test finger, which is modelled like a human finger.

The Commission for Occupational Safety and Health and Standardisation (KAN)

found that the length of the test probe B, specified in the international standard IEC 61032, needs to be modified. The test probe simulates a human finger and is sometimes called “test finger” or “test finger B”.

The current dimensions of the test probe B is based on anthropometric data from the 1960s. Numerous standards make reference to this test probe, most notably IEC 60529 “Degrees of protection provided by enclosures (IP Code)” (2014), which claims to ensure “protection of persons against access to hazardous parts inside the enclosure” by using test probe B.

The safety objective is no longer reached because the length of 80 mm was specified decades ago and no longer reflects the actual dimension of human fingers. New findings show that protection is not ensured for a substantial percentage of persons. Therefore the lengthening of the test probe B is urgent. Furthermore standards are intended to reflect the state of the art in consideration of scientific findings.

Defining the dimensions in individual product standards is **not** effective. The purpose of a superordinate basic safety standard is precisely to compile findings in one generic standard without every committee having to specify its own provisions (unless there are reasons for deviating provisions). Standards committees drafting product standards rely on generic standards being correct.

By the beginning of October, IEC/TC 70 – the Technical Committee in charge, shall be deciding whether IEC 61032 should be revised. If you believe the standard should be changed, please contact your [national standardisation body](#) to vote with in favour of a revision.

The ETUC calls for a stop to all ISO standard activities on ‘compensation system’!

In 2019, ISO launched a proposal to draw up an international standard on 'compensation systems'. The ETUC had strongly opposed this project as it represents an unacceptable risk of interfering with national legislation and collective agreements (see our previous [newsletters](#)).

Despite our efforts to stop this initiative, an ISO technical committee has now started to work on compensation systems. The ETUC resumed its lobbying efforts in June, by mobilising its affiliates to maintain the pressure at National level to cease all activities on compensation systems. The ETUC prepared a statement, publicly available on our [website](#), and raised the issue with the European Commission, highlighting the risk of the ISO work given that the principle of primacy of international standards does not guarantee a robust control of legality and compatibility of international standards before authorising their application at EU and national levels.

Compensation mechanisms or any wage systems belong to the core competences of public authorities and social partners. The autonomy of trade union organisations and employers' associations to bargain collectively is a key prerequisite in any democratic systems and is a fundamental right worldwide. Only stronger collective bargaining systems and binding collective agreements can set and promote decent and fair wages. Compensation systems, or any other wage related mechanisms, should not be addressed in private standard setting activities.

**In the spotlight: Covid-19 outbreak
launches new standardisation
proposals**

Following the global outbreak of the Covid-19 virus and its impact on the world of work, ISO has proposed a set of new standards. Currently, few of the ISO work covers the protection of health, safety and well-being of workers operating during a pandemic. A number of proposals have been made for new work in ISO dealing with specific aspects or sectors of managing the risks relating to the pandemic. In the next articles, we present some of these. If you would like to have more information, please contact the ETUC Secretariat, kbehnke@etuc.org.



ISO standard on Safe work during a pandemic – General guidelines for organizations

Protecting organisations and their workers from the risks related to a pandemic is of immediate global importance. Many countries and organisations are struggling to balance ongoing economic activities whilst effectively protecting people from the ongoing risks of COVID-19. Advice changes frequently and also varies significantly from region to region, making it very difficult for organisations, particularly those with limited resources, to respond quickly and effectively. The ISO/Technical Committee 283, therefore, sees a demand for ISO guidance on OH&S management during the current COVID-19 crisis. ISO will start the development of a generic overarching document on working safely during this, and potentially other pandemics, with a view to assist organisations worldwide in managing

pandemic-related OH&S risks. Due to the urgency, the leadership of ISO/TC 283 develops an ISO PAS (Publicly available specification) route to deliver a document as quickly as possible. The intention is to continue work immediately after the PAS is published and develop it into a full international standard following the usual process.



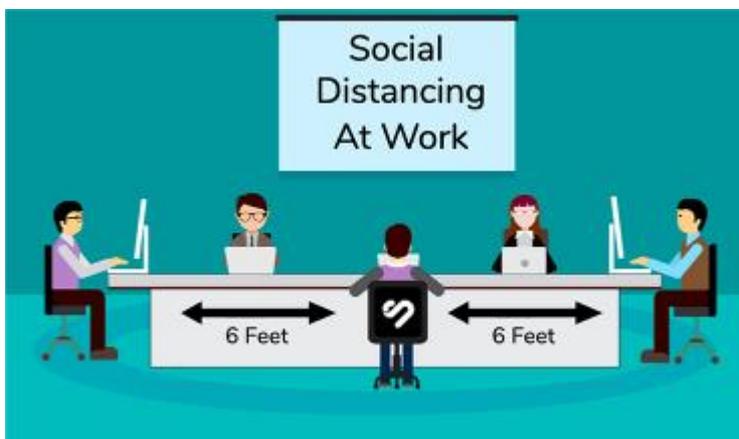
ISO Guide for Facility management - Emergency management of epidemic prevention in the workplace

ISO/TC 267 'Facility management' is writing an ISO Guide on "*emergency management of epidemic prevention in the workplace*". The purpose of this guide is to ensure the health and safety through facility management in response to outbreaks in all types of workplaces. This guide specifies the general, epidemic prevention and control strategy deployment, organization and leadership; epidemic prevention work requirements; resource guarantee; prevention and control process management; prevention and control supervision; as well as improvement requirements of the facility management industry. This standard is now proposed to be an ISO European Standard.



ISO Global Health System Quality Management System Standard

ISO proposes to prepare a *Management System Standard (MSS) for Healthcare Quality Management*. The proposers consider it timely and a necessary project to pursue, especially in the context of the present COVID 19 pandemic, which has exposed global management deficiencies in non-clinical health care management, such as procurement (e.g. of medical equipment), human resources management (e.g. part-time staff working in different facilities) and information management. The ambition is to go beyond the remit of the existing European health management systems standard (EN 15224) by including the perspectives of developing countries and with other ISO quality management standards in the health care sector, focusing on the aforementioned non-clinical management questions. The vote on the proposal will close mid-November.





China proposes to elaborate a Guidelines for social distancing in Workplaces and Workflows

The Standard Administration of China (SEC), a state-driven organisation, proposed to elaborate, within ISO, an International Workshop Agreement on “Guidelines for Social distancing in Workplaces and Workflows”. The proposal closed early September. Based on the outcome of the evaluation, the ISO/Technical Management Board will have to decide if this new standardisation work is appropriate. According to SEC, this new work would contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 17. The first meetings of the Workshop are planned to take place in Beijing, from 24 to 26 November.

Webinar on Aircraft Cabin Air quality: is aircraft cabin air toxic?



International
Transport Workers'
Federation



European
Transport Workers'
Federation

NEWS FLASH

Aircraft Cabin Air Quality WEBINAR September 15th or 16th

The Global Cabin Air Quality Executive (GCAQE) is hosting a free 2 hour webinar on Aircraft Cabin Air Quality, with time for a Q & A session.

The dates of the webinar are:

- September 15th at 10:00 (CET time*)

or

- September 16th at 19:30 (CET time*)

* please note Central European Time zone

Registration is required. Click the preferred date below to register:

[15 September 2020 - 09:00 UK time](#)

[16 September 2020 - 18:30 UK time](#)



GCAQE
Global Cabin Air Quality Executive



GCAQE Webinar Aircraft Cabin Air Quality

This webinar should be of interest to:

- Representatives of employee and workers' rights/ trade unions/ associations;
- Pilot, cabin crew and maintenance employee interested parties
- Societal interests/societal stakeholders
- Consumer interests

Zoom - 2 hours
Tuesday 15 September, 2020
9 AM (UK time)

Wednesday 16 September, 2020
6.30PM (UK time / 1.30PM New York, EST time)
Registration required (see below)

To book a free place for either date please use the link below
<https://www.gcaqe.org/webinar>

Join us for a 2 hour webinar covering all key areas relating to aircraft cabin air quality:

- GCAQE overview: who we are what we do
- Health and flight safety
- Regulatory implications
- Airline risk assessment
- Recent legal cases
- Air crew reporting system (EU/US regulation, ICAO guideline, GCARS...)
- Medical protocol (new)
- Recirculated air & COVID 19 (including ASHRAE statements) and the importance of air conditioning...
- Current and recent industry activities: FACTS project, CEN/TC 436, SAE, A4A, ICAO, IATA, sensors, filtration...
- Current trade union/association activities
- Educational tools
- Fb pages available and national focal points where available

Followed by Q&A




GLOBAL CABIN AIR QUALITY EXECUTIVE

The Global Cabin Air Quality Executive (GCAQE), with the support of the ETUC, the European Transport Workers Federation (ETF) and the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), is organising a two-hour webinar on the Aircraft Cabin Air Quality.

It will provide you an insight into issues such as health and flight safety, regulatory implications, airline risk assessment, medical protocol, educational tools, etc.

The two-hour webinar is free and will take place on:

- [Tuesday 15th September 2020 at 10h00 \(Brussels time\)](#) – (9h00 UK time)
- [Wednesday 16th September 2020, at 19h30 \(Brussels time\)](#) - (13h30 New York Time)

To register, click on the above links.

Virtual workshop on Standardisation



The German Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy is organising a virtual workshop on “Empowering European standardisation for a successful Green Deal”.

The workshop will take place on **16th September from 14h00 to 16h30.**

Following the Keynote contributions, including that of Commissioner Thierry Breton, there shall be panel discussions. These panel discussions shall be followed by a Question and Answer session from the virtual Audience. To register and more information is [here](#) .

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