



Technical Handbook of Personal Protective Equipment

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Please note that sections will be published as they are completed.

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Disclaimer: Information is given in good faith. It is the responsibility of people using the information to assess the situation of suitability for purpose in their companies and organizations.



Introduction and History

History and Background

The Southern African Protective Equipment Marketing Association – SAPEMA - was founded in 1961 as the Personal Protective Equipment Association with six members.

At that stage membership was limited to companies supplying 'Personal Protective Equipment worn on the body'. One of the main purposes at the time was for the association to have an approvals committee to approve products available in South Africa. Problems were encountered from the start with this and over the years no great progress was made in that area.

Over the 20 years up to 1981 membership increased to 17 members. All along close liaison had existed between the association and the National Occupational Safety Association - N O S A - especially with regard to exhibiting at their congresses.

In early 1982 the name of the association was changed to Southern African Protective Equipment Manufacturers Association, and by 1982, membership had increased to 27 members. The third name change was made in 2003 with the word 'Manufacturers' being changed to 'Marketing' to reflect the status of the members in the new South Africa. The association has continued to increase membership, and today comprises some 47 members and forms part of NOSHBO (National Occupational Health and Safety Board), an umbrella organization consisting of all the associations involved with worker safety in Southern Africa. In addition to Sapema, these other associations are The Safety First Association, founded in 1932 by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, IoSM (The Institute of Safety Management) and SAIOH (SA Institute of Occupational Hygienists).

This umbrella organization NOSHBO is the force behind SAFCONEX, an annual conference and exhibition, and through the Sapema Technical Committees, Sapema is involved in product standards with SABS and Dept of Trade and Industry. Further details can be found on our website www.sapema.org

Reference Book of Personal Protective Equipment

This was first produced in 1984 as a wire-bound A5 publication comprising 128 pages, selling for R4.00 plus gst!.

The Technical Handbook which follows is laid out by PPE category, for example Head Protection, Hand Protection etc, each of which will be posted on our website as they are completed. The information is designed to educate people in the safety and protective equipment industry, and as it is a huge task undertaken by individuals who lead busy lives in their professional capacities, it is possible that not all questions are answered in each category. Comments and questions are invited; this is a work in progress and any input is welcomed. Please email Sapema Technical at: info@sapema.org
Sapema Executive Committee, July 2010

