Safety First

The IVPS E-Magazine



IVPS
Interessenverbund Persönliche Schutzausrüstung e.V.

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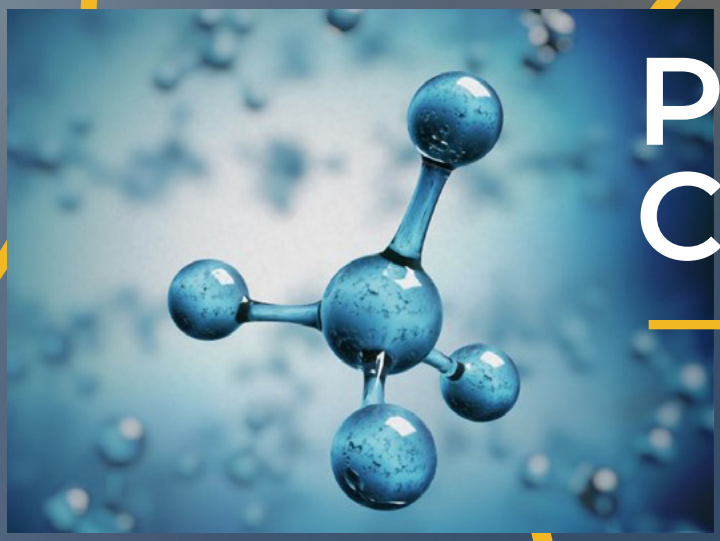
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Dear Readers,

Looking at 2026, there's no getting away from the fact that we are facing several challenges. We have seen how restrained investments and unstable economic environments are placing high demands on companies. Nevertheless, we do have some positive news to announce, namely that our PPE sector is fundamentally in a good position, with a future that looks favourable and most notably full of motivation and innovative energy – essential factors for our entrepreneurial resilience.

IVPS supports its members by providing concrete information and reliable guidance. We are currently creating our own statistics, based on publicly available statistical data, exclusively for our members. These facts and figures will appear as a dashboard and provide an insight into the economic performance of a range of PPE segments, thus making changes visible sooner and giving a wider foundation for decision-making.

Meanwhile, our association's political activities remain more important than ever. PFAS restrictions, the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation, and the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation have forced businesses to face complex demands. We are monitoring the developments, promoting the interests of the sector and showing what the stipulations mean for manufacturers and their products. It's precisely when regulations overlap that a loud common voice and practical guidance are needed.

The latest Safety First Magazine issue also offers diverse insights, as always. I highly recommend our feature on Dräger. The interview shows how this traditional company brings experience, responsibility and technological developments together – and how safety has to be reassessed repeatedly.

Good protective equipment helps make risks manageable, not unlike our sector – reliable information, clear guidance and common action are the best protection when times become confusing. Happy reading!

Warm regards,



Martin Leusmann
Chairman of the IVPS e.V.



Product News



Tradition meets innovation in firefighting

In keeping with its long firefighting helmet tradition, MSA is taking its new Gallet® F1® into the future. Developed in cooperation with fire services, the helmet unites optimum safety, a high level of comfort and modmodular versatility, making it geared to the increasing demands of modern firefighting.



Protection you can rely on

Wherever they are used, be it in industry, trades or logistics, the Work SensaTril® disposable gloves from SSV-Kroschke impress with their high level of comfort and robust nitrile. They provide reliable protection from chemicals, mechanical risks, oil and contamination and are also food safe.



Maximum protection. Complete concentration.

The Dräger CPS 7900 Titanium Edition offers superior protection in high-risk operations. The fully approved and perfectly coordinated protective system – from the air source to the mask – combines innovative technology with a high level of ergonomics, thus enabling emergency teams to concentrate on what's essential even under extreme conditions.



Eye protection that thinks ahead

The uvex hypervision system combines a high level of comfort with flexible eye and face protection. The full-vision safety goggles provide a wider field of vision, an adaptive fit and anti-fog, scratch-resistant lenses. An optional face guard increases the areas of application. They can also be worn alongside safety helmets, respirators and earmuffs.



Anti-static skin protection

The Peter Greven Physioderm (PGP) SINEPRINT® skin protection cream combines effective skin cream with the specific demands of ESD work environments. It protects and nurtures the skin without having a negative effect on necessary electrostatic charge dissipation. ESD compatibility was verified by an independent research institute.



Breathe safely. Save lives.

Used in mining, tunnel construction and the industrial sector, DEZEGA breathing apparatuses from Bartels-Rieger provide reliable safety in the event of smoke, toxic gases and low oxygen levels – irrespective of the surrounding air. Their solutions are designed for self-rescuers and professional emergency rescue teams. BartelsRieger is responsible for the distribution of its products throughout Germany and across Europe and offers comprehensive technical support.



Safety that feels good

The ELTEN Terry XXFit Boa® safety shoe combines reliable protection with a high level of comfort. Three widths provide a perfect fit, while the Infinergy® cushioning by BASF absorbs impact with every step. The Boa® Fit System enables a fast, micro-adjustable closure. Ideal for long shifts in industry, trades and logistics.



When every breath counts

The PM Atemschutz ChemMax 3 PRO is a CBRN positive pressure protective suit that provides reliable protection during highly dangerous missions. Its multilayer, high barrier film protects from chemicals, sprays and biological hazards. Panoramic and overhead visors provide unrestricted visibility and freedom of movement, while the flexible air supply (e-breathe e-Flow) meets a variety of demands for applications and operational environments.



Sustainability in safety

PETZL's modified NEWTON® fall-arrest harness range combines trusted safety with a resource-saving design. The lighter industrial harnesses are partially made from recycled textiles – making up nearly 78% of the fabric in the NEWTON FAST. The harnesses continue to be ergonomic, comfortable and easy to put on.

When technology meets responsibility

A conversation about safety, trust and innovation

Dräger has stood for ‚Technology for Life' and developed solutions that protect human lives all over the world for more than 135 years. For our company feature this year, we met up online with Stefan Denker, Head of Marketing Safety Industries. Even though the editorial team could not visit their site in person this year, we enjoyed a friendly and open conversation where we were able to gain a fascinating and lively insight into the history of this family-run business from Lübeck, Germany.



Dräger develops ‚Technology for Life'. How does the company manage to keep this aspiration alive in times of rapid technological advancements?

For us, ‚Technology for Life' is more than a mission statement. We develop solutions to meet our customers' needs; solutions, which will protect people while making their work safer. Sensors, digitisation and data analysis provide many opportunities, yet they should not be an end unto themselves. What matters is which technology would actually add value in practice. When developing our products and solutions, we draw on our customers' experiences shared through our global sales and service organisation. Take for example respiratory protection for mine rescue teams, which Dräger has been developing for about 120 years. Mine rescue teams in the USA are still referred to as ‚Drägermen' – a unique testament to the deep-rooted association of our technology with protecting human lives.



The company site in Lübeck is the largest one in Germany. The CEO Stefan Dräger is the fifth generation of his family to manage the company. Is it different working for a family-run business? And how are the sites interconnected?

I have been working for Dräger for nearly 36 years and have always clearly felt its family business vibe. Decisions are made on a long-term and sustainable basis – with the aspiration that Dräger is in a strong position when handed over to the next generation, all the while keeping the needs of our customers and employees in mind. The shared purpose of our work is what connects our sites with each other – we protect people and safeguard them from harm. Moreover, we draw on regional experiences for product development. Many employees from all over the world come to Lübeck for their onboarding process and learn about the company's origins, values and identity. Because regardless of all our regional diversity, we remain at our core a family-run business from Lübeck.

Dräger is active in a number of sectors – from industry to fire and emergency services through to defence. Which of these areas is developing more dynamically than others at the moment and why?

The dynamics vary greatly between region and area of application. While industry is quite subdued in Germany at the moment, the need for occupational safety and health protection is growing strongly around the world. Regions where basic requirements were once all that was needed are now seeing higher demands for safety and prevention. We were able to increase our order intake in safety technology by about nine per cent worldwide in the first half year. Besides respiratory protection and personal protective equipment, solutions in gas measurement technology for early hazard recognition are also highly sought-after. Our service business is growing as well – from hardware maintenance to safety staffing solutions. We are seeing one particularly strong development at the moment in the Defence and Security division where we want to triple our sales by 2028 compared to 2025.

Dräger develops safety technology for users across the entire world. How do you bring global quality standards in line with the very different demands of regional markets and operational conditions?

Thanks to the close customer contact that we maintain through our global sales and service organisation, we are able to identify regional peculiarities, while basic standards are progressively aligning with each other internationally. Certain quality standards are non-negotiable for Dräger – irrespective of the market or price. We determine together with the users what kind of protection and safe handling are crucial and which additional functions such as cleaning, hardware maintenance or service we can improve. This approach creates a sophisticated portfolio for different markets that always meets our high quality standards.



Stefan Denker,
Head of Marketing
Safety Industries

The demands on personal protective equipment are constantly evolving. What changes have you observed lately among your customers and where do the challenges lie?

Comfort, ergonomics and easy handling are still the main demands on PPE. But work cultures and individual needs are also changing. One example is the trend for men to wear beards and the fact that standard respiratory masks are often not suitable for the many men with beards now. This is why we expanded our fan-assisted respirator portfolio with hoods and helmets, which provide a suitable level of protection using positive pressure. The importance of digital device administration is also growing: RFID chips, software solutions and cross-linked testing equipment document the return, cleaning, testing and maintenance of safety equipment. The challenge lies in bringing the protective effect, user friendliness and business processes together.

Dräger works closely with users, research institutes and sector partners, including IVPS. What significance do collaborations and partnerships like these have for your company?

Associations such as IVPS enable conversations between manufacturers, users, public authorities and other parties. Together we can pool our positions on regulatory aspirations, guidelines or topics such as PFAS and represent them to policymakers and the EU Commission. Moreover, we bring our expertise in standardisation bodies and collaborations with research institutes. This helps us identify developments early on and create long-term viable solutions.

European manufacturers are facing growing competition from international suppliers. Which factors do you believe are vital in ensuring that high-quality products ‚Made in Europe' also remain successful in the future?

Quality, reliability and innovative strength are vital. When it comes to safety technology, the purchase price should not be the only thing that matters – the products have to work in crucial moments. Europe provides reliable safety standards thanks to standardisation and market monitoring. Add to that customer proximity, advisory support and service during the entire product life cycle. Therefore, a product that at first may seem to be expensive can be the more economic solution. European manufacturers will remain successful when they react flexibly to new needs and underline the added value of their quality.

Artificial intelligence is increasingly finding its way into industrial processes. Where do you see tangible applications of AI in operational safety and safety technology?

When it comes to the benefits of artificial intelligence, people's safety has to have priority. AI can analyse measured data from gas detectors, recognise patterns and point out critical developments, such as stealthy leaks, early on. There is also potential when it comes to the maintenance of safety equipment. With the aid of cameras and an operator, our Dräger Inara ‚digital safety guard' can monitor several critical working environments, identify emergency situations and initiate a rescue chain promptly. Responsibility remains in the hands of humans – AI supports them in acting quicker on a more informed basis.

The WeLEAD model is based on trust. What does trust mean to you personally when it comes to working with your teams and partners?

For me, trust means being able to assign tasks and responsibility. There is a common goal and a deadline – and then I rely on it being carried out. Leadership has nothing to do with micromanaging. Trust is essential precisely because teams do not sit together in an office every day. It also includes employees or partners being able to approach me openly when there are difficulties and we find a new way to solve it together. When I know that I have a good team and reliable partners at my side, it creates space – for empowerment at work, new ideas and other important tasks. This way of working together not only makes you more successful, but is also a lot more enjoyable.

PPE Compact

PFAS Restrictions

What lies ahead
for the PPE industry?



European chemical policy is focusing on PFAS because of their high persistency. They fulfil important functions in PPE. The proposed comprehensive restriction of all PFAS also covers fluoropolymers such as PTFE. Any future exemptions for PPE have not yet been finally announced.

Where are PFAS used in PPE?

Fluorocarbon finishes can give clothing water-, oil-, chemical- and dirt-repellent properties, e.g. in firefighting protective clothing and chemical protective clothing. But high-visibility clothing, flame-retardant clothing, cut protection trousers and bulletproof vests can also contain PFAS. Furthermore, fluoropolymers such as PTFE can be used in protective membranes, filter material, seals and other components. There are no equivalent substitutes for many applications.

What applies already?

PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds (‚C8 chemistry') have been prohibited since 2020 in compliance with the POPs Regulation. The transitional period for certain protective textiles ended in 2023. Moreover, C9–C14 PFCAs, their salts and C9–C14 PFCA-related substances have been restricted since 2023 under REACH Annex XVII Entry 68. Very low limits apply.

Since 10th October 2026, REACH Annex XVII Entry 79 has also restricted PFHxA, its salts and PFHxA-related substances (‚C6 chemistry'), including in clothing and related accessories, footwear and mixtures for the general public as well as in cosmetic products; from 10th October 2027, the restriction will also include other textiles, leather, furs and hides for the general public. Exempt from these restrictions are PPE falling under Category III points (a), (c)–(f), (h) and (l) of Annex I in the PPE Regulation. Protective clothing for armed forces, officials involved in the maintenance of law and order and emergency response workers, or exclusively for professional or industrial use generally does not fall within this scope, as confirmed by a European Commission guidance document.

What is planned for the future?

A POPs ban on C9–C21 PFCAs, their salts and C9–C21 PFCA-related compounds was introduced by the Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/1972, which shall apply from 16th December 2026. REACH Annex XVII Entry 68 is scheduled to be repealed and replaced.

The comprehensive restriction on all PFAS is still being assessed. The Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC) adopted its opinion in March 2026. The Committee for Socio-Economic Analysis (SEAC) is expected to finalise its final opinion by the end of 2026. Then the Commission along with the member states will decide on the details for future regulations. Scope and duration of any PPE exemptions are not yet known. A blanket exemption for all PPE for 13.5 years after coming into force, as originally suggested in the Annex XV dossier, has not been confirmed. In its preliminary statement from March 2026, SEAC only recommends exemptions for PPE in Category III (a) and (c). It does, however, note that data availability is poor and further PPE within Category III may be exempt.

What does this mean for manufacturers?

Manufacturers should document PFAS in all components, look into alternatives and remove unintentional production-related contamination. The EN 17681-1:2025 test standard takes into account PFAS released by alkaline hydrolysis, which can also better detect unintentional trace impurities.

Dr David Biskup
Advisor for Pollutant Management & Ecology
GermanFashion Modeverband Deutschland e.V.

Good To Know

Sector data in a compact form

We are in the process of developing our own PPE statistics exclusively for our members, which in the future will provide a well-founded insight into the sector's development, help recognise current sector trends and make it easier to plan ahead better. For more information, please contact Mirja Schindewolf.

Your voice for the PPE industry

A PPE advisory board was established in the German Federal Ministry of Labour on the initiative of IVPS. The panel aims to strengthen direct communication between the sector and politics as well as play a part in representing the positions of the PPE industry at EU level better. There are plans for our member companies to express their opinions on relevant topics, digitally and directly. We will keep you up to date

Statement on PFAS restrictions

IVPS, along with Gesamtverband textil+mode, GermanFashion and Deutscher Textilreinigungsverband (DTV), has compiled a Statement on PFAS restrictions in PPE and medical textiles and addressed it to policymakers in Germany.

Top training course

GermanFashion (IVPS cooperation partner) is offering the training course to become a PPE expert (IHK) in 2027. The course imparts compact and practical knowledge in nine modules so that participants will be able to market legally compliant PPE. The first module starts on 7th April 2027 – you can register here.

EmpCo: More flexibility for existing stock

The new temporary regulation in §15b UWG (German Act Against Unfair Competition) can take the pressure off companies with older stock. There is no general sell-off period as of yet, but in the future courts will be able to place a stronger emphasis on the principle of proportionality when assessing violations. Companies are well advised to properly document stock data, compliance effort, costs and environmental impact.

Harmonised standards

The EU Commission published a new Implementing Decision with an updated list of harmonised standards for PPE in the Journal of the European Union in June 2026.

Knowledge available 24/7

ESF, our European umbrella organisation, regularly publishes short, informative webinars on a wide variety of topics, including respiratory protection and skin protection. The webinars are recorded and available on the ESF YouTube channel.

SAVE THE DATES

Our next IVPS members' meeting will take place in Düsseldorf on Thursday, 15th April 2027. Details to follow in due course. We look forward to seeing you there.

A+A 2027 The next world's leading trade fair and congress for personal protection, occupational safety and health at work will open its doors in Düsseldorf from 19th to 22nd October 2027.

ESF PPE Seminar 2027 The next PPE seminar hosted by ESF will take place in Belgium from 16th to 18th June 2027. You will find more information well in advance here and through IVPS.

Our Members

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