

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) HEAD PROTECTION – BUMP CAPS



SCOPE: This document represents best practice advice available and considered pertinent after consultation within the membership and incorporating HSE guidance. It is intended to assist member companies wanting to adopt a 'Bump Cap' policy and offers guidance on selection, introduction and management of the policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Impact injuries to the head feature heavily in accident statistics throughout industry. This is particularly true of the malting industry where it normally shows up in the top five reasons for accidents. This is due to a number of reasons: Poor design and layout of plant; 'add on' pieces of equipment restricting access; the need to carry out maintenance work on equipment in situ; breakdowns etc.

Often these impact injuries result in cuts that require medical attention and, because it is seen as impossible to move this or that piece of equipment, subsequent accident investigation fails to address the root cause. Therefore 'it's one of those things' so be more careful.

Areas where construction work is being carried out are automatically designated as hard-hat areas and everyone recognises the hazards and accepts the need to comply. However, where there is negligible risk of items falling from above, hard-hats are not always the best option to choose when moving around/between the silos, bins and steel pipe-work etc that make up our malting plants. This is where the Bump Cap comes into its own.

2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to ensure the health and safety of all employees and visitors (including contractors) to their sites.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks for all work activities.

The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 whose main requirement is that personal protective equipment is to be supplied and used at work wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways.

3. DEVELOPING AND INTRODUCING A BUMP CAP POLICY

3.1 BUMP CAP SELECTION

- Bump Caps selected should conform to EN812 Standard
- Bump Caps selected should be compatible for use with other PPE where required
- Bump Caps should be comfortable for the wearer. There are many different styles to choose from, most PPE suppliers will give you free of charge, a selection for trialling
- Bump Caps can have different sized peaks; consider this during selection process
- Bump Caps are not suitable protection in construction type environments
- Bump Caps in some environments cause the wearers to sweat, this is where correct selection is important. Have spares available to staff so they can change them if the headband becomes wet
- Bump Caps used for visitors will require hygiene arrangements, so consider disinfectant wipes for pre and post use, or the wearing of head liners under the bump cap

3.2 INTRODUCING BUMP CAPS

- There will be resistance from some staff to wearing a bump cap
- Introduce to the workforce the accident data (if not already there) and explain the history, seriousness and how to prevent impact injuries
- Select a number of volunteers to trial different types of bump cap and formally record the findings, then share the feedback good or bad with the employees
- Work with a PPE supplier for trial bump caps and also ask their advice or recommendations specific to your environment

3.3 INTRODUCING A BUMP CAP POLICY

- Decide on the areas that will be designated bump cap areas, or those that will not (depending on which is easiest to do). Try to avoid complex mapping or signing. An example of a designated area would be anywhere outside the office block
- From the trials carried out it is likely that you will select only one or two styles of bump cap, so allow all staff to choose their preferred style
- Develop from the above points a draft Bump Cap Policy and communicate to all employees, visitors and contractors, with a start date. The policy should also contain details of any sanctions that will be taken if people do not adhere to the policy
- Introduce a 'honeymoon' period where this draft policy will be tried and modified if necessary based on feedback, observations etc. During this period, if you find personnel not wearing their bump cap in designated areas, it is suggested they are re-educated and reminded of the need to wear them and that no formal disciplinary action is taken
- Modify the draft policy if required, then issue as the final company policy, implementing all aspects of it, including any disciplinary clauses
- Implementation of this policy, as with all other policies, requires the support and active management by all in a supervisory or management position
- Remember to add the policy into induction processes for staff, visitors and contractors
- Ensure you have sufficient bump caps available for visitors

4. POLICY REVIEW

Once the policy has been in place for a period it should be reviewed to see that it is working, does not need modifying and that it has achieved its purpose. Accident statistics should demonstrate whether or not the policy is a success. This information should then be communicated to the employees so that it raises their awareness and demonstrates that accidents/injuries are preventable.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

The following HSE publications may provide further advice:

- *The Personal Protective Equipment at Work regulations 1992*
- *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work, A Brief Guide INDG174 (Rev2)*
- *Risk Assessment, A Brief Guide to Controlling Risks in the Workplace INDG163 (Rev 4). This leaflet is available at www.gov.uk/pubns/indg163htm*