



# PPE and RPE



**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** and **Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)** are essential for keeping you safe at work. They're your last line of defence when hazards can't be eliminated or controlled by other means.

**PPE** includes items like safety helmets, eye protection, high-vis clothing, safety footwear and gloves.

**PPE** is not just about hi-vis clothing – it's about being seen by train drivers and those who are working with you.

**PPE** also protects you from hazards/risks from the task you are undertaking, for example, specialist PPE for chemical, electrocution and burns protection.

**RPE** protects you from breathing in harmful substances like dust, fumes or gases.

## Key facts

- PPE is required by law under the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 and Rail Industry Standard , RIS – 3279 –TOM
- All PPE should be suitable for its intended task, inclusive and, where possible, sustainable
- All PPE and RPE, including force air-fed RPE, should be cleaned and maintained to retain performance levels
- Incorrect or inconsistent use of PPE/RPE is a major contributor to workplace injuries and long-term health issues.

## Your experience with PPE

- Have you ever worn PPE that didn't fit properly or wasn't right for the task? What did you do?
- What's the most common PPE mistake you've seen on site? How could it be avoided?
- Have you ever seen someone wearing dirty or old PPE on site? Did you do anything about it?
- Are you aware that NR offer a laundry PPE service who will CLEAN, label and return your PPE?



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# What to do



## What does 'good' look like?

### Before the task

- **Check the risk assessment** – What hazards are present? What PPE/RPE is required?
- **Inspect your equipment** – Is it clean, undamaged and in date?
- **Fit it properly** – Especially for RPE, ensure a proper seal. Use face-fit tested FFP3 masks, or Air-Fed respiratory protection when required.

### During the task

- **Wear it consistently** – Don't remove RPE mid-task – only when it is safe to do so

- **Stay visible** – Only remove PPE when you're back at the access point area and at vehicles
- **Stay alert** – If your PPE/RPE equipment becomes damaged or uncomfortable, move to a position of safety and report it.

### After the task

- **Clean and store correctly** – Follow any specific instructions for maintenance and storage of RPE. Use the company provided laundry system for cleaning your PPE
- **Report issues** – Damaged or missing PPE must be reported and arrangements made for replacements.

### TOP TIP

If your PPE doesn't fit or feels wrong, don't just 'make do'. Speak up. Ask for replacements.



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# What to do



## Do

- ✓ Use the right PPE/RPE for the task
- ✓ Complete face-fit testing for tight-fitting FFP3 RPE
- ✓ Replace disposable items as per the manufacturer's instructions and training
- ✓ Store PPE in clean, dry conditions and use the PPE lockers where provided
- ✓ Refer to manufacturer's instructions prior to use.

## Don't

- ✗ Don't modify or personalise your PPE
- ✗ Don't share PPE and RPE unless it's been cleaned and approved for reuse and sharing
- ✗ Don't ignore discomfort – it could mean your equipment isn't working properly
- ✗ Don't wash your PPE at home – you could be exposing others to harmful contaminants, dust and chemicals.

## Questions to consider

### 1 Personal Confidence

- How confident are you at selecting the correct PPE or RPE for your tasks?
- When was the last time you reviewed task risk control sheets for PPE/RPE Requirements?

### 3 Practical use

- Do you check your PPE before use? What's your routine?
- Have you ever had to stop a task because of missing or faulty PPE? What did you do?
- Do you know how to dispose of PPE?

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### Learning and improvement

- What's one thing you've learned about PPE or RPE that others might benefit from?
- Speak to your local Health and Safety Team if there is anything you'd like more training or support on when it comes to PPE/RPE.

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### Team culture

- How do you support others in your team to use PPE and RPE correctly?
- What would you do if you noticed a colleague using PPE incorrectly or not at all?



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# Resources



## Resources and support



### Contacts

Your Line Manager – First point of contact for PPE/RPE issues

PPE Helpdesk – [nrppe@mailln.custhelp.com](mailto:nrppe@mailln.custhelp.com)

Local Health & Safety Team – For advice on selection, fit testing and maintenance.



### Related NR Standards

NR/L2/OHS/021 – Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

NR/L2/OHS/00106 – PPE Management

NR/L2/OHS/00107 – RPE Fit Testing and Use



### Useful Links

MyConnect:

<https://networkrail.sharepoint.com/sites/nrmyconnect-routeservices/SitePages/PPE.aspx>

HSE – PPE: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/ppe.htm>

HSE – RPE: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/respiratory-protective-equipment>



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