ISO/FDIS 11611:2022(E)

Position paper NA 075-05-02-01 AK N 67

The standard EN ISO 11611 "Protective clothing for use in welding and allied processes" has been revised in recent years. HB Protective Wear GmbH & Co.KG has been actively involved through the German national mirror committee NA 075-05-02 AA for PPE for heat and flame protection, representing the side of manufacturers of PPE clothing.
The most significant change to the previous version of the standard, EN ISO 11611:2015, is the addition of a test method to assess the protective performance of clothing against artificial UV radiation emitted during various welding methods.
Although we welcome and anticipate the possibility of being able to test welders' PPE for UV protection time, Neither the test method nor the current version of the standard are mature enough to be accepted as state of the art.
While the standard acknowledges that fluorescence, whether intentional or unintentional, adversely affects UV test results, it does not provide a workable solution for those materials where fluorescence cannot be avoided. These include, for example, all HiVis materials and lighter colours such as light grey.
HB Protective Wear GmbH & Co.KG is supportive of the decision of the Technical Board CEN BT to follow the recommendation of CEN/TC 162 to reject the FprEN of ISO 11611 and to stop the European project, resulting in ISO 11611:2024 not being adopted as a European standard.
The deficiencies in the ISO 11611:2024 version would have meant that a large proportion of products on the market would not have been fit for purpose, not because of a lack of protection, but because of shortcomings in the test method or the requirements of the standard. The current version would have had far-reaching implications for products on the market, as some of them cannot be tested reliably because fluorescence distorts the results.
Following a recent decision by the Technical Committee ISO TC 94/SC 13/WG 2, ISO 11611:2024 will be revised and the Vienna Agreement can be reintroduced. We look forward to the revision of the standard and hope that it will provide a working solution for all welders' PPE in the near future, either in the form of an optional test for products where fluorescence is detected, or better still, a verified working test method for all materials.

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