



Improving safety of machinery in Slovakia from the point of view of standardisation, testing and certification

Ivan MAJER

Technical University of Košice

Letná 9, SK-042 00 Košice

Political changes in Slovakia in 1989 brought also a new orientation in the area of standardization , testing and certification. The international and European standardization fell to reflect more in the Czechoslovak standards. The formation of the Slovak republic in 1993 is the incoming milestone, which required a large transformation of the Czechoslovak standards into the new Slovak system as well as the creation of new authorities for standardization , testing and certification. But the substantial revolution in this area was stimulated by the accessing process of the Slovak republic to be a member of the European Community. The harmonization of the national legislation with the *acquis communautaire*, as well as the practical procedures regarding standardization , testing and certification were the challenge and task of the pre-access process. From 1999 the Slovak standards are based on the status of voluntariness. It is the significant change, because the Slovak standards had been obligatory regulations for long years. They appointed obligations. The content of standards matched to that base. At present the European standards are implemented as STN EN (ISO). The "STN" means: Slovak Technical Norm.

Standardization , testing and certification have notably a significant influence in the area of safety and health at work. Connecting to the legal requirements, which prescribe "what" must be done, there is a need of standardized procedures and rules, which are providing the solutions "how" the legal requirements can be fulfilled. Standardization , testing and certification are important especially in technical safety, safety of machinery, because they play a significant role in ensuring the free movement of products in the member states. The Directive No. 98/37/EC on technical requirements for machinery and on conformity assessment was harmonised in the Slovak republic only last year. The harmonised Governmental regulation (No. 310/2004) implements the EC conformity declaration and the machinery marking wholly by using the CE mark in Slovakia.

In the year 2004 the European Standard EN ISO 12100 -1, -2 on safety of machinery was implemented into the Slovak system as well. It is vital for the conformity assessment. These steps open new possibilities for Slovak designers and producers in asserting at the European market. On the other hand, they are setting strict criteria for the compliance of standardised safety and they are obliging to higher responsibility.

My contribution describes some principles of safe machine building and machine placing on the market from the point of view of standardization , testing and certification in the Slovak republic. The consistent observation of design principles and the ability to assess the risk, as early as in a construction project, as well as the ability to reduce residual risks are the significant conditions for the reputation of Slovak products at the European Market.