

# Inclusivity in Standards: The importance of people, product & process

Natalie Wilson, Founder & MD

Workwear Solutions International Ltd



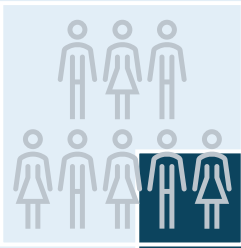


## **Natalie Wilson**

Founder & MD - Workwear Solutions International

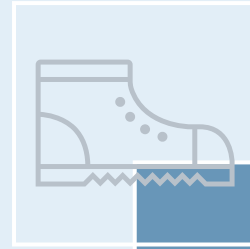
Chair - BS 30417

Convenor JTC/23 WG6 – Inclusive PPE



# People

- Those who Standards are designed to protect (**Workers / End Users**)
- Designers & Product Developers (**Manufacturers**)
- Decision makers & risk assessors (**Employers**)
- Those involved in the development of Standards (**Technical Experts**)
- Those involved in development of regulations (**Legislators**)



# Product

- Worn all day, every day or in specific scenarios
- Final line of defence in risk hierarchy
- How Standards actually protect workers = physical outcomes of testing & Certification



# Process

- Recruitment & structure of committees
- Committee meeting types, structure & approach
- Standards development, creation & review
- Design, development & manufacture of product
- Testing & Certification
- Procurement & specification of product

# Questions:

1. Do you believe the Standards Committees you personally work in, have a truly representative membership – including voices of diverse end users and technical experts?
2. Have you, or anyone in the Standards Committees you personally work in, ever worked in an environment where you had to wear PPE, selected by somebody else, for a full working day / night?
3. On average, what percentage of the membership of the Standards Committees you personally work in, is female?

# Current Challenges

## People

- Increasingly diverse workforces
- Higher levels of risk for particular groups and individuals
- Unable to safely complete tasks or work in specific environments

## Product

- Not fit for purpose if it is not fit for form – anthropometric data is outdated
- Higher costs of R&D and manufacturing limiting access to inclusive PPE
- Unable to certify outside of standard requirements / fits / test modelling

## Process

- Test methods are based on limited profiling and require review / updating
- Limited representation of end users / product users in committees
- Non-representative committee structures & non-inclusive meeting formats

# European Commission Report – Inclusivity in Standards

“European harmonised standards are used to design safe products. However, **if standards do not consider the diversity of human bodies** in terms of size, structure and composition, **they may fail to ensure the safety, comfort, accessibility and usability** of products for the whole European population...”

European Commission Study on the Inclusiveness of Anthropometrics in European Harmonized Standards found “For **76 standards, the potential impact of non-inclusiveness on human health and safety is assessed as high**, thus calling for an **urgent revision of the relevant legislation.**”

# What is Inclusive PPE?

“PPE that is **designed, manufactured and selected** to provide equality of access to, and provision of, **correctly fitting PPE** for all wearers; providing the required levels of personal protection without creating an obvious point of difference between wearers, or inadvertently creating secondary risks or hazard (including trips, falls, snagging)”

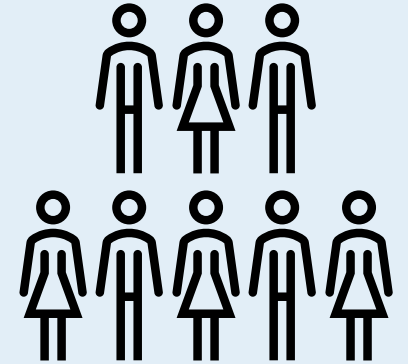
BS 30417 – Provision of Inclusive PPE



# Why does Inclusive PPE matter?

## Poor Fit is systematic

- 38% - use a workaround to make their PPE fit
- 50% experience improper PPE fit
- 58% - use PPE that is the wrong size at least some of the time

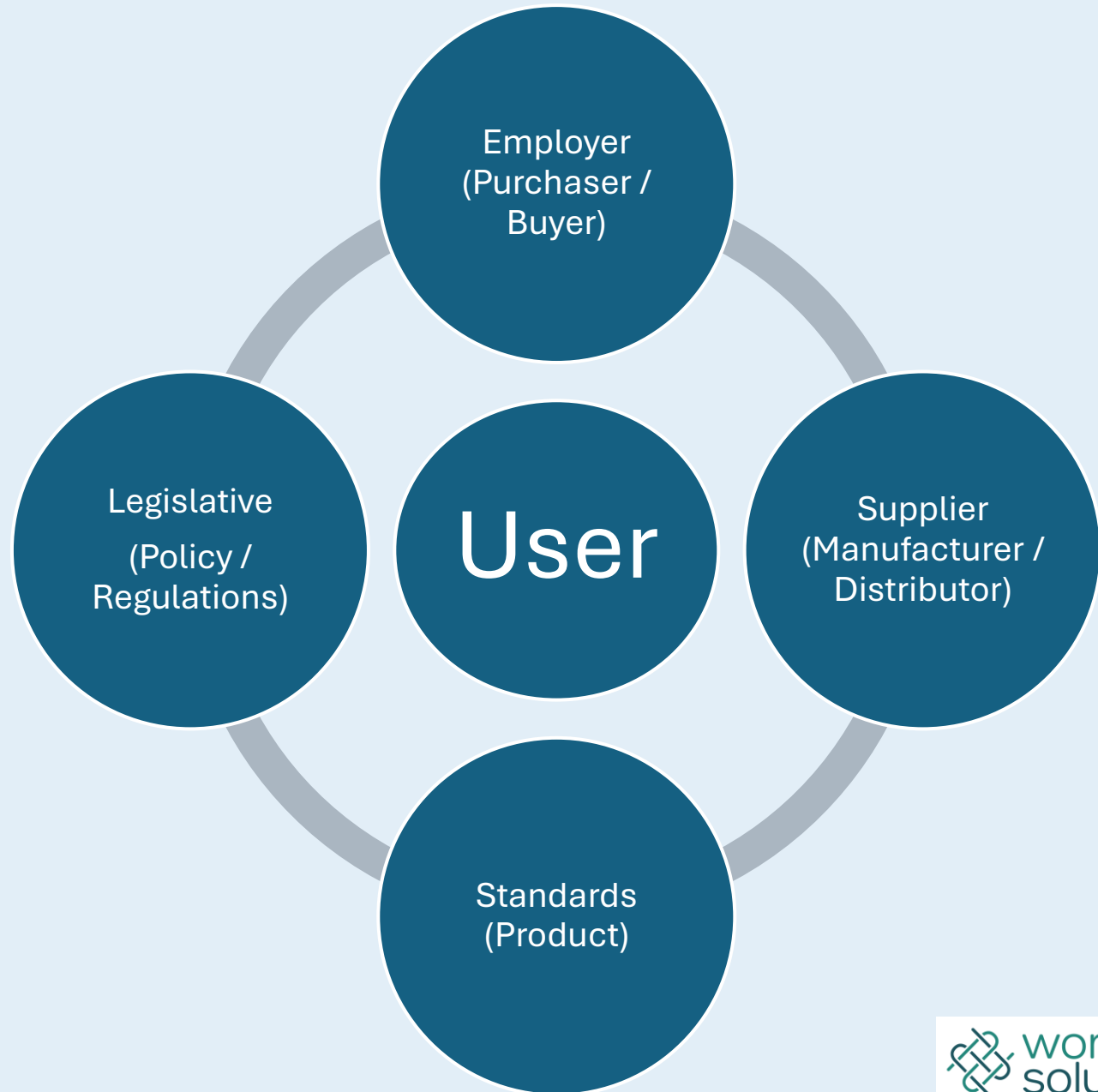


## Impacts on work & safety

- 57% of women said their PPE sometimes or significantly hampered their work
- 40% report injuries or incidents linked to PPE
- Only 29% reported using PPE specifically designed for women

Sources: Canadian Women's Experiences with Personal Protective Equipment in the Workplace Survey of almost 3,000 PPE users and TUC, Personal protective equipment and women (2017)

# User Centric Approach



# Understanding the needs of the wearers

## Permanent Needs

E.g. gender, religious or cultural

## Changing Needs – Longer Term

E.g. age, disabilities

## Changing Needs – Shorter Term

E.g. pregnancy, illness

## Other Considerations

E.g. neurodiversity, skin sensitivity

# Improving Inclusivity in Standards

## People

- Understand - what does the European workforce 'look' like today?
- Engage – actively seek diverse representation in Committees

## Product

- Think creatively! – what can already be accommodated or adapted?
- Review – what is preventing testing or development of PPE for your area of expertise?

**If processes limit representation, prevent testing and product development for diverse workers, we can't truly meet the needs of the people we are supposed to protect!**



# Thank You

# Any Questions?

Natalie Wilson, Founder & MD

E: [natalie@wsiltd.co.uk](mailto:natalie@wsiltd.co.uk)

M: +44 (0) 7551979891

Web: [www.wsiltd.co.uk](http://www.wsiltd.co.uk)

