KAN Brief
Kommission Arbeitsschutz und Normung
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# CLIMATE CHANGE:
## SPHERES OF ACTIVITY FOR STANDARDIZATION

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# Climate change places demands on occupational safety and health

Climate change gives rise to fundamental changes in the world of work. Rising temperatures, more frequent extreme weather events and new stresses upon human beings and materials present challenges for the occupational safety and health community, and thus also for standardization. Future technical rules and standards must give greater consideration to how climate changes impact upon the safety of work equipment and the work environment. Examples are requirements for protection against heat, ventilation, material durability, and the safety requirements to be met by new technologies.

The digital product pass (DPP) will be an important instrument in the future. Mandatory DPPs are being introduced successively for more and more products. They offer a means for product-specific information on constituent substances and the products' recyclability and safety characteristics to be presented systematically and made available to all affected parties over a product's life cycle. It is in the occupational safety and health community's interests to use this tool for its own purposes and define content for its possible inclusion in the DPPs at an early stage.

Climate change is lending new impetus to the digital transformation and the quest for greater sustainability. The occupational safety and health community must ensure that consideration is given to safety aspects from the outset in all these processes. This is crucial in order to ensure that occupational safety and health remains fit for purpose under changing climatic and technical conditions. **«**

# KAN expert discussion explores topics for standardization

Climate change affects all areas of life, and the workplace is no exception. Its effects therefore also require decisive action on the part of the occupational safety and health community. Standards that support the energy transition or make work equipment and buildings more sustainable and capable of coping with climatic conditions must be monitored closely by occupational safety and health experts.

Climate change increases the likelihood of hot days; solar UV radiation exposure levels are rising, and extreme weather events such as torrential rain are becoming more frequent. This aggravates outdoor work. Measures to mitigate climate change or deal with its effects are therefore becoming an increasingly important part of prevention activity.

Standards are also relevant to the responses to changing conditions. They result in new products being placed on the market that satisfy a consensus-based safety standard. Revisions of existing standards can, for example, give consideration to changing environmental conditions, or reduce a product's carbon footprint. Since climate change is a global problem, European and international standards are a particularly important part of the response.

In March 2025, experts from all stakeholder groups in occupational safety and health attended a KAN expert discussion. Together, they identified and grouped climate-related topics that are relevant to occupational safety and health and standardization:

### Climate protection and new energies

- Discussions of **e-mobility** placed particular emphasis on the significance of safe **batteries**. Expertise in the areas of life cycle, recycling and condition monitoring must be established and expanded, and incorporated into standardization and regulation.
- The participants in the expert discussion identified the safe production and recycling of **wind turbine** rotor blades as areas relevant to occupational safety and health.

### Impacts of climate change

- **Personal protective equipment (PPE)** is not a new topic per se, but deserves greater prominence owing to climate change. More intense solar radiation requires PPE to exhibit greater UV resistance; stronger perspiration increases the importance of clothing and footwear, for example, being permeable to water vapour. The OSH stakeholders must advocate for existing standards to be adapted to changing environmental conditions. The need for tests of PPE to cover a wider temperature range is an example.

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- At the same time, new topics are emerging; cooling vests are an example. Such topics first require a body of scientific knowledge to be established, which can then be incorporated into standards. A further need is for sustainable materials to be used for PPE, or its service life extended. From an occupational safety and health perspective, however, this is justifiable only if safety continues to be assured without compromise.
- In **buildings or indoor areas**, aspects such as insulation or protection of roofs against hailstorms must be taken into account during planning or renovation, in order to assure the protection of workers. An important example is daytime accommodation on construction sites (mobile facilities available for use by employees, for example during breaks).
- Innovative solutions for protection against **UV radiation and heat** have been proposed, and must be tested for their suitability for occupational safety and health purposes. These include mobile shade systems, tarpaulins held by drones, and the greening of buildings or mobile walls.
  In the view of the OSH community, scope for improvement exists in standardization, in a test procedure for sunscreen. The procedure currently assumes that a layer be applied to the skin with a thickness that is not normally achieved in practice.
- The heat stress index is a numerical value expressing the thermal stress on human beings caused by a number of influencing factors. **Measurement methods** used to form the heat stress index are known for indoor areas and are established in standards. In the view of the OSH community, a similar method should be formulated for outdoor work.
- Invasive **vectors/mosquitoes** or an increase in their incidence gives rise to a need for technical measures, e.g. fans, to protect workers against them.

### Sustainability of products, structures and processes

- The principle of the **circular economy** also poses new challenges for occupational safety and health: repairability, sustainability, quality standards, recyclability of products and the safety of recycling processes. Consideration must always be given to the potential conflict between sustainability and safety. In the view of the OSH community, safety must be given priority.
- Expansion of the purpose of the **digital product passport** (DPP), whose content may include information on hazardous substances in products, has now been taken up by the European Commission. The Commission plans to make the DPP mandatory in the future for numerous product groups, including machinery. The DPP could also be used to provide important information for occupational safety and health, e.g. on safety measures in recycling processes.

### From identification of topics to implementation

Based on the results of the expert discussion, KAN has formulated primary foci and starting points for its work:

- In the future, KAN will be active in a number of bodies concerned with the safety of hydrogen technologies.
- Together with the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, KAN is examining the legal framework for daytime accommodation on construction sites. Important issues include insulation against heat and cold and air conditioning of the mobile accommodation facilities. If necessary, requirements can be formulated jointly with experts, and established in a standard.
- KAN plans to work with experts from the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the DGUV (IFA) and the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA) to examine how the development of proposed standards concerning the heat stress index in outdoor areas could be launched.

It is already becoming apparent that the number of standards on these topics will increase. This makes it all the more important for the occupational safety and health community to coordinate with the stakeholders at an early stage and explore areas where action is particularly needed.

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# Digital product passports for the circular economy

**Digital product passports will provide helpful information for numerous product groups in the future. The affected parties have been working on the passports' introduction and the opportunities they offer for the circular economy and occupational safety and health since the Ecodesign Regulation was published in the summer of 2024.**

The EU Ecodesign Regulation for sustainable products[1], which came into force in the summer of 2024, introduces the concept of digital product passports. Many updated legal texts in product law now also include the requirement for such a product passport. Examples are the Batteries Regulation[2], the Construction Products Regulation[3] and the future Toy Safety Regulation[4].

A digital product passport is a product-specific data record that can be accessed electronically, for example through a QR code. It contains a wealth of information on performance characteristics, and mandatory information such as the unique product identifier, conformity documentation, user manuals, instructions for use, warnings or safety instructions, manufacturer's information and the $CO_2$ footprint. The data varies according to the product group, and is specified in product-specific regulations or associated delegated acts.

Product passports enable product information relevant to safe use, repair and recycling, including information concerning the safety of human beings and the environment, to be made available to all parties across the value chain and throughout the product's life cycle. Product passports are intended to promote the circular economy and make sustainable products the norm.

Rights to access the data differ for each economic operator, according to the operator's function. The product passport can be used by companies to combine the information with that of other products. This makes digital product passports useful for creating digital twins of complex products. It also enables the entire life history of a product to be tracked. This in turn may facilitate a wide range of services relating to reprocessing, repairability, reuse, second life, recyclability and new business models. A further aspect is the possibility of tracking raw material extraction/production. Consumers can use the data to make informed purchasing decisions.

Product passports also support market surveillance and customs authorities in the performance of their duties. In particular, the provision of reliable information to authorities and policymakers supports them in assessing risk assumptions and developing appropriate options for action.

## Opportunities for the occupational safety and health community

The primary purpose of the digital product passport is the sustainability of products. However, it also offers opportunities for improving occupational safety and health. Workers in a wide variety of jobs are involved in the individual stages of product manufacture, use, repair, reprocessing and recycling. For employers, the product passport could become an important source of information for risk assessment. If an employer is aware of what hazards a particular product poses, or of where substances giving grounds for concern are to be found in the product, it is easier for them to take appropriate protective measures for different activities. The information contained in the product passport is particularly important during the planning phase, for example for the construction of new installations, as retrofitting or subsequent modifications are usually very costly, and often not even possible, for technical or structural reasons.

Not all information in the digital product passport is relevant in all phases and for all parties involved over a product's life cycle. It is therefore all the more important that information on risks, known for example from the manufacturing process, is available to repair and recycling processes, and vice-versa. For example, the fibres of carbon fibre materials become thinner and shorter only after repeated shredding processes. This increases the risk of the fibres entering the lungs and the body being unable to degrade them. In this scenario, a risk suddenly arises at a point in a product's life cycle that was not relevant during the use phase of the original product. If such knowledge of risks is retained down the value chain, workers can be better protected.

## Implementation of digital product passports

Digital product passports will become mandatory by law successively for all product groups. The battery passport is planned for 2027. It will be followed by other product groups, beginning with textiles, construction products, toys, mattresses, furniture, and detergents and cleaning agents. The technical requirements for this process are still in preparation. The standards sector has already begun intensive work on establishing harmonized structures, thereby making a major contribution to implementation of the digital product passports in the field. The form to be taken by the content will follow, and is already dictated in part by the statutory requirements. Whether it will be advantageous to launch standardization work on content relevant to occupational safety and health has yet to be seen and discussed.

Implementing the digital product passport system in industry and making the data accessible in a standardized form will entail considerable effort for all parties involved. One advantage is that a large amount of information is already available at the various points along the value chains. Once digital product passports have been implemented, they can also support compliance with the requirements for documentation, verification and due diligence. It is to be hoped that the potential of this communication tool will be exploited to the full across sectors and regulations, as the European Commission intends with its Single Market Strategy[5].

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[1] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1781/oj
[2] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/1542/oj
[3] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3110/oj
[4] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_1039
[5] https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/single-market/strategy_en


You can hear more about digital product passports in episode 24 of the KAN podcast (in German): **www.kan.de/podcast**

# 3 questions for: Marion Hasper, Coordination network for environmental NGOs on standardisation

**The Coordination network for German environmental NGOs on standardisation (KNU) advocates in the standardization process for the protection of nature, the environment and health. Marion Hasper, director of the KNU's office in Berlin since 2009, talks to us about current topics and the challenges presented by her work.**

### How did the KNU come to be founded, and what exactly does your own work involve?

Thirty years ago, three well-known organizations – the German Federation for the Environment and Nature Conservation (BUND), the German League for Nature and Environment (DNR) and the Federal Association of Citizens' Initiatives for Environmental Protection (BBU) – determined that it wasn't sufficient for them to be active solely at the political level. With the introduction of the New Approach, the interests of conservation and environmental protection also needed to be voiced in standards development, in order for the design of products to be made more environmentally responsible, and greater consideration to be given in standards to the conservation of resources, energy efficiency, and the reduction of pollutants. This required a dedicated body representing these interests.

The topics addressed by the work and the political and strategic interests of the KNU are determined by the steering committee and a technical subcommittee. The current three supporting bodies, i.e. the BUND, DNR and NaturFreunde Deutschland, are represented on the steering committee and also on the technical subcommittee, on the latter together with the German Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU), the German Federal Environmental Agency (UBA) and the Environmental Protection Helpdesk of DIN (DIN EPH).

My tasks as director of the office include work in higher-level strategic committees, for example on the steering committee of the DIN Standards Committee Principles of Environmental Protection, and the subcommittees of DIN EPH. The core work of the KNU is performed by experts drawn from associations, currently twelve in number. These experts exert influence

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upon the actual content of standards in the committees at DIN and DKE. They receive their mandate through the KNU, and we support them in the event of problems. They're open to networking with other stakeholders, such as the DIN Consumer Council or KAN, in order to attain greater influence. Wherever possible, our experts are also active at CEN/CENELEC and ISO/IEC. We coordinate closely at European level with our umbrella association, the Environmental Coalition on Standards (ECOS).

### In your view, what achievements by the KNU were the most notable?

Our achievements include the standards governing chemical wood preservatives. Our influence has resulted in precedence being given to design measures for wood preservation. This has provided architects with stronger legal reasoning for their proposals for the use of design measures to assure wood preservation, and it has also become easier to establish this precedence in construction standards and in the German regional building codes.

In addition, we've been successful in reducing the use of flame retardants in a standard addressing electrical appliances; these substances may cause considerable harm to health and the environment during their manufacture, in the event of damage and during recycling. Management standards, particularly ISO 14001 on environmental management and ISO 50001 on energy management, are a recurring topic. It falls to the KNU to maintain the high standard of requirements when such standards are revised.

We were recently pleased to note that adoption of a DIN SPEC for the definition of "plastic-free" was averted. Together with other bodies, including the DIN Consumer Council and the German paper industry, we persuaded DIN to terminate this project, in order to prevent greenwashing.

### What are the greatest current challenges and foci in standardization for the environmental associations?

One challenge is the changes in the work processes of the DIN standards committees. On the one hand, we welcome the option that we've had since the pandemic of attending meetings virtually, as this reduces our travel overhead. However, meetings in person, attendance at which was easy to schedule in the past, have now been replaced by numerous additional online meetings. A further issue is acceleration of procedures at ISO and DIN, and the increasing adoption of DIN SPECs as proposals for standards. All this places pressure upon our experts, as they don't do this time-consuming work on standards full-time, but alongside their regular jobs.

A major topic at present is the circular economy. DIN has drawn up a standardization roadmap on this subject, which has resulted in the formation of several new committees. In this area, we're involved in standards for specific management and ecodesign issues, and also concerning chemical recycling and textiles. Committees addressing the consequences of climate change and the traditional topics of environmental and energy management are also important.

# Ventilation requirements for operator's cabins: horizontal standard rather than individual solutions

Mobile machinery is often used in environments contaminated with hazardous substances and biological agents. To protect the operating personnel, a number of machinery standards set out requirements for the design and ventilation of enclosed operator's cabins. The level of protection specified differs, however, from machine to machine. OSH stakeholders take the view that a harmonized reference should be created.

Operator's cabins, and requirements concerning their ventilation for protection against biological agents and hazardous substances, are addressed in numerous standards for mobile machinery. Design requirements are often formulated in a section of a product standard (e.g. for industrial trucks, earth-moving machinery or forestry machinery). Some standards are also devoted exclusively to the ventilation of a specific type of mobile machine (e.g. mining machinery or tractors).

The corresponding standardization activity is conducted in a number of standards committees, and the groups of experts involved are often working in isolation. The OSH stakeholders therefore consider it appropriate to analyse what requirements for the ventilation of operator's cabins can be formulated in a horizontal standard applicable to all types of machinery, so that the operating personnel enjoy the same level of protection against biological agents and hazardous substances. Each standards committee affected could then refer to the requirements of the horizontal standard, or where necessary adapt them to the respective mobile machine.

## Evaluation by KAN provides an overview

In 2023, KAN tasked DIN Software with conducting a survey analysis identifying all standards in which operator's cabins are addressed and in which their ventilation, and thus their protection against hazardous substances and biological agents, are relevant. The scope of the analysis did not include requirements concerning the cabin climate or ergonomics. In a follow-up project, a team led by Dr Günther Weise from the German Center for Forest Work and Technology (KWF) evaluated the full texts of the relevant documents. The aim was to identify ventilation requirements that could be viewed as generic: for intended use on the one hand in environments contaminated with hazardous substances and biological agents, and on the other in uncontaminated areas. The results were to be incorporated into a document serving as a basis for the draft of a horizontal standard (type B standard).

Following identification of relevant documents, they were reviewed and relevant ventilation requirements categorized, enabling those that could be considered generic to be identified systematically. Of the standards examined, documents from the field of construction machinery were the most numerous, followed by those for agricultural machinery, industrial trucks, railway technology, mining machinery and forestry technology. Many of these standards also explicitly formulate requirements for cabin ventilation when the machinery is used in contaminated areas.

## Differentiation between dusts and hazardous substances/ biological agents

To enable the standards to be evaluated, a list of keywords was compiled that reflect the relevant aspects of ventilation technology (see Figure). With reference to the frequency and content of the corresponding references in standards, a more detailed analysis was performed of which requirements are relevant for a horizontal standard. According to the analysis, the main hazards associated with the operation of mobile machinery are dusts (usually of mineral origin, but possibly also of biological origin, such as wood dust). These are neither toxic nor infectious; their harmful effect arises from their physical properties.

The standards examined are unanimous in requiring a closed operator's cabin for use cases involving hazards due to dust exposure. The cabin must feature a supply air inlet with a filter insert, possibly even with a prefilter, and a ventilation element including an exhaust outlet. Suitable filters, for example to EN 1822-1, High efficiency air filters (EPA, HEPA and ULPA) – Part 1: Classification, performance testing, marking, must be used. The system as a whole must ensure a positive pressure in the cabin. In addition to the requirements concerning filters, analysis of the standards also identified requirements for design of the air ducting and pressure tightness. This can be regarded as the basic level of protection for operators against dust.

Where the air is contaminated by hazardous substances with toxic effects or biological agents with infectious and sensitizing effects, the working environment is deemed to be contaminated. In such cases, the ventilation system of the operator's cabin must satisfy requirements extending beyond those for the basic level of protection, in order to assure effective protection against contamination. Examples of these requirements are controlled positive pressure atmospheres, compressed air breathing systems and suitable filter components. A horizontal standard should also provide information on other aspects to be considered when hazards are presented by gases and vapours (e.g. special gas filters).

## European or international standard envisaged

The project resulted in the preliminary text of a draft standard, entitled: Self-propelled machinery – Ventilation systems for enclosed cabins – General requirements for protection against hazardous substances and biological agents. This document proposes common basic requirements to be met by ventilation systems in the enclosed cabins of self-propelled and mobile machinery, tractors and industrial trucks.

The draft defines two categories of cabin for different working environments. The first category includes basic protection against general exposure to dust. The second category provides additional protection against hazardous substances and biological agents. By modifications to the ventilation system, cabins in this category can also be adapted to provide protection against hazardous gases. A very important aspect of this draft standard is that the requirements also apply to retrofit solutions, an approach taken by many manufacturers and users. KAN will now submit this document to the responsible committee at DIN with the aim of presenting it as a proposal for a standard at European or international level.

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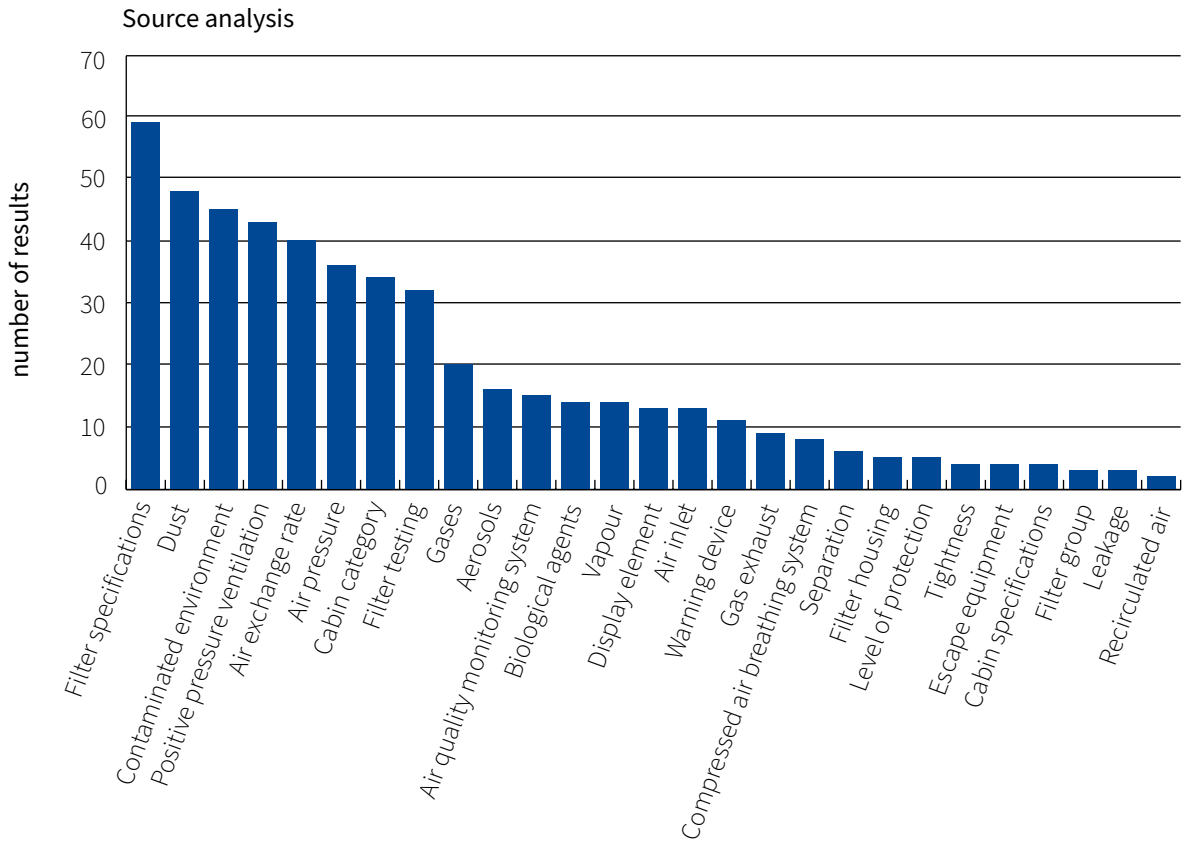

# When standards lose their memory

**Are the processes of standards development – international, European or national – as transparent, efficient and sustainable as they ideally should be? Based on his personal experience, gained over two decades of active involvement in standardization activity, Peter Paszkiewicz, Head of the test and certification body at the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the DGUV (IFA), sees an urgent need to ensure that decisions taken in the standards development process continue to be transparent over the long term.**

As I have seen from my own experience at the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV), one aim of expensive and time-consuming research is to set out requirements in standards for the safe design of products and to develop the corresponding test procedures. On the one hand, product requirements are formulated as a result of accident investigations; on the other, pre-normative research is used to develop test procedures that may be very complex. The extensive preparatory work may ultimately be summarized in just a few sentences in the text of a standard. These sentences are, however, scientifically validated.

This presents a problem in that generally, no systematic record is available, either internally within the standards bodies and their committees or publicly, that would readily permit scrutiny at any time in the future of the requirements and of the form of the test set out in the standards. As a result, when the experienced experts working at the forefront of standardization retire, as many are about to do, and are replaced, hardly anyone will be left who is familiar with the background to the provisions in the standards and able to verify them. As a result, the next generation might dispense with evidence-based decisions and provisions that have been in place for decades, and might do so with neither discretion nor warning.

### What are the consequences when results are documented, but not the process?

A good example is the recent revision of the 2013 version of ISO 1999, Acoustics – Estimation of noise-induced hearing loss. Like the versions preceding it, the 2013 version is based on sound scientific research conducted in the 1970s. In the course of the revision, the standards committee sought to build on more recent but poorly validated findings. These could have led to significant problems in the form of excessively strict occupational safety measures at high-noise workplaces. Only through intervention by one of the last remaining experts to have been actively involved in production of the 1990 version, and objection by KAN in 2024 (see KANBrief 4/24), was it possible to halt the current revision efforts. This provision of the standard has now been left unchanged. Might this intervention have been completely unnecessary, if clear and fully documented validation of the requirements had been available?

Another example is the intensive dialogue between European parties to the standardization of respiratory protection in the early 2000s, following observation of unexpected deviations in round-robin tests of particle-filtering half masks. Owing to new requirements, parts of the testing apparatus were seen to have a significant and hitherto unknown influence on the measurement result. Consequently, the requirements upon the apparatus were revised. Will important findings like these, which have been obtained by European experts at great expense through numerous meetings and comprehensive laboratory tests, survive the next rounds of revision? Would it not be advantageous in this case, too, to document and preserve these studies clearly together with the standard?

It is important that the public also be allowed to participate in the deliberations and background for the establishing of normative requirements, rather than access to supporting documents being limited to experts actively involved on committees. This can be seen from the example of the formal objection raised by Germany in 2023 to the EN 149 standard for particle-filtering half masks, which as a result of the pandemic became known as “FFP2 masks”. The objection criticized certain design and testing requirements. Perhaps the formal objection would not have been raised at all had the background to the standardization activity been presented transparently and in a form accessible to the public, thereby also allowing committed experts who were not involved in the committee work to participate?

It’s time we learnt from the numerous examples like these. The essential points – i.e. those defining the parameters relevant to safety – of the scientific and technical background to all important requirements and test procedures in standards must be comprehensible to future generations of standardization experts, and must be documented thoroughly and in ways that also permit their inspection by the public. The practice of the MAK Commission could serve here as a model: when setting limit values for hazardous substances, it prepares extensive documentation of reasoning for each substance. The current working methods in standardization are neither transparent nor sustainable. Standardization claims to be scientific. This must therefore be reflected in all steps and at all levels of its activity.

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# Occupational safety and health and standardization: still exciting, 30 years on

On 1 July 2025, Angela Janowitz, Director of the KAN Secretariat, passed the baton to her successor, Dr Monika Maintz. Looking back, Ms Janowitz talks to us about her 30 years in the service of occupational safety and health in standardization.


Angela Janowitz (right) and her successor, Dr Monika Maintz

**You were part of the crew at the KAN Secretariat almost from the outset. Do you remember those early days?**

Yes, I remember them well! It was an incredibly exciting time. The whole project was born just as times were changing: the Eastern Bloc had recently collapsed, Europe was becoming more open, new countries were joining the EU – everywhere, the mood was one of confidence, openness and a belief in a strong, shared European future.

In line with the mood at the time, Europe boldly set a new course: standards developed by the private sector were to support the implementation of EU legislation. Standardization acquired a key role in the European Single Market – and occupational safety and health was explicitly made part of the process.

This was the environment in which KAN was founded by the German stakeholders in occupational safety and health, with the involvement of DIN. The aim was to give the OSH stakeholders a strong voice vis-à-vis standards bodies, and to implement the requirement of European legislation for the social partners' influence on standardization activity to be facilitated. At the Secretariat, we were given considerable freedom to turn this mandate into action. Our first task, however, was to build trust in KAN and the Secretariat among all relevant occupational safety and health stakeholders. For the first time, the stakeholders had a dedicated forum to discuss standardization. To lend greater weight to occupational safety and health in standardization, the stakeholders were to reach their decisions by consensus. At the time, this was considered a very ambitious goal. An important step in this direction was taken in 1996, when the DIN Presidial Board recognized KAN as the representative of occupational safety and health stakeholders in German standardization activity, thereby lending particular weight to its voice.

From that point on, KAN had the task of advocating for high safety requirements in product standards. At the same time, the OSH stakeholders considered it important to keep the safety and health of workers at work within the scope of national regulatory arrangements. They had already clearly laid down the boundaries of standardization in the German Consensus Statement (GDS), adopted in 1993. In 1997, the European standards organizations CEN and CENELEC also passed a res-

olution limiting standards' scope in shaping of the working environment. ISO and IEC emphasized in their internal regulations that requirements for products and their use should be addressed in separate standards or parts of standards. Defending these boundaries of standardization remains one of KAN's tasks to this day.

**What has changed over the past 30 years at KAN, and more generally in the area of occupational safety and health and standardization?**

Standardization has become much more international in nature during this time. The OSH community has had to fight to be a part of this process. In addition, standards have increasingly encroached into areas that are regulated in Europe at national level, outside the scope of standardization. This inevitably leads to conflicts. As recently as 2000, the adoption of a British standard on occupational safety management as an international standard was averted, not least thanks to the efforts of the occupational safety and health stakeholders. However, this was not a permanent solution: today, ISO has an entire technical committee devoted to developing standardization documents on this topic.

Standardization is constantly influenced by political developments, new technologies and global events, all of which force KAN to adopt a position. One example was the negotiations concerning the TTIP free trade agreement, which began in 2013: although they ultimately failed, standardization was an important element in these negotiations. In close coordination with OSH partner bodies in France, KAN has repeatedly advocated against such an agreement being reached at the expense of safety and health.

**What's your take on the current situation with regard to occupational safety and health and standardization?**

We're living in a time of great upheaval – social, political and technological. For a long time, the focus of our activity lay on open markets and international cooperation. Now, however, we're seeing a growing reversion to regional solutions, in our case at European level, and a desire on the part of countries to regain greater control over their markets and processes. This is also evident in standardization.

Overall, the sphere of standardization policy in which KAN operates has evolved hugely. As early as 2003, the European Commission announced its intention to progress with development of the New Approach, i.e. the interaction between European legislation and standardization. Since then, further legislation and strategies have been adopted to strengthen and harmonize this system further: in 2008, the "New Legal Framework", with regulations governing market surveillance and accreditation; in 2012, the EU Standardisation Regulation; and in 2022, the EU Standardisation Strategy. Revision of the Standardisation Regulation is currently in the pipeline. The Commission wishes to modernize the standardization system and accelerate its processes, and to fulfil its shared responsibility for the content of standards. It wishes to reduce its dependence upon global markets and become better prepared for the digital and green transition. KAN's view is that ensuring a high level of transparency in the process, involving all stakeholders and developing standards by consensus will remain essential in the future.

A further challenge at present is the rapid technical development of new products such as smart personal protective equipment, self-driving vehicles, smart glasses, collaborative robots and artificial intelligence. These offer numerous opportunities to reduce risks in day-to-day work, but at the same time also give rise to new hazards. OSH experts provide in-depth specialist knowledge on these subjects, and with KAN's support, present the interests of the OSH stakeholders in standardization activity.

I'm particularly pleased to see that KAN has continually developed, both in its expertise and as an organization. Its stakeholders continue to stand united behind the KAN project. And the Secretariat's domain expertise is valued, in Germany and across Europe. That's our strength. To sum up after 30 years: KAN has been and continues to be a strong voice for occupational safety and health, and against the backdrop of current developments, is as important as ever.

## ISO 1999 acoustic standard: revised version containing errors is averted

ISO 1999:1990, Acoustics – Estimation of noise-induced hearing loss, has long been a recognized standard for determining and assessing workers' exposure to noise, and is also referenced in EU legislation (Directive 2003/10/EC). The standard was scheduled for revision in 2024. However, the draft of the revision contained scientifically incorrect information that would have led to protective measures, such as hearing protection, being mandatory at lower noise thresholds than previously (e.g. during use of a vacuum cleaner, work by aircraft cabin crew). No reasoning exists for these measures.

Together with the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the DGUV (IFA) and the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA), KAN drew up a statement on these methodological errors, and invoked the unanimous vote of the stakeholders in occupational safety and health (see KAN-Brief 4/24). The draft standard was rejected in the autumn of 2024 by both the German mirror committee and ISO.

However, following minor amendments to the content, the standard was then to be transposed into an international Technical Specification (ISO/TS). In the survey on changing the form of the document, the IFA once again drew attention in the mirror committee to the unanimous vote of KAN. Germany then voted against the amendment, although this did not prevent the TS from receiving majority support internationally. However, it was rejected, its content still scientifically incorrect, in the ISO consultation in 2025. Thanks to their criticism, which was also voiced internationally on many occasions, the occupational safety and health stakeholders were thus ultimately able to avert the requirement for protective measures to be taken even at low noise levels, despite the need for these measures not being reasoned from a prevention perspective owing to methodological errors.

## New KAN position papers

KAN has published several position papers in recent months:

**Standardization of AI: key points formulated by the OSH stakeholders**

Including positions on aspects such as risk management, the design and explainability of AI systems, and adaptation of existing standards addressing functional safety to AI applications.

**Safety of highly automated, driverless mobile agricultural machinery**

Including requirements concerning underlying safety conditions, such as precise definition of danger zones and reliable detection of human beings (workers and third parties, including children and persons with impaired ability).

**Requirements that in the opinion of the OSH stakeholders should be met by the European Commission's study of adult anthropometrics**

Including surveying of current hand measurements, the provision of a normative guideline on the use of anthropometric data, and free access to raw data.

www.kan.de/en/standardization/basic-documents-kan-position-papers

## A+A 2025: KAN will be there

**A+A, the occupational safety and health trade fair,** welcomes visitors to Düsseldorf from 4 to 7 November 2025. KAN will be present on the DGUV's joint stand, Stand 5D32 in Hall 5. We will be there to provide information on the topical subjects we are currently addressing, such as driverless mobile agricultural machinery, standardization of AI in an occupational safety and health context, anthropometrics in standardization, and operator cabins. We will be presenting our publications, and will be happy to answer any questions you may have concerning occupational safety and health and standardization.

"Technology meets safety: the power of standardization in occupational safety and health" is KAN's topic in the "Safety and health talks and discussion" on Tuesday, 4 November at 2:30 pm on the stage of the DGUV stand.

At the **A+A Congress**, KAN will be presenting the following topics:

- 4 November 2025, 9:30–11 am: People made to measure: DIN standards & anthropometric data – how do they fit?
- 4 November 2025, 2:45–4:15 pm: Position of the German occupational safety & health stakeholders on AI-related standardization
- 4 November 2025, 2:00–6:00 pm: Vision Zero versus standardisation: a position statement
- 6 November 2025, 4:30–6:00 pm: Many standards, one problem: ventilation requirements for operator cabins

For further information on the trade fair and the congress programme, visit: www.aplusa.de

## New chair of the Governing Committee at the DGUV and VFA

Hans-Peter Kern has been appointed the new chair of the Governing Committees of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) and the Association for the Promotion of Occupational Safety in Europe (VFA). He assumes these roles from Manfred Wirsch, who represented the interests of the insured parties in this capacity for eleven years.

Manfred Wirsch remains a member of the DGUV and VFA Governing Committees, and also Chair of the Governing Committee of the German Social Accident Insurance Institution for the trade and distribution industry (BGHW) – a position he has held since 2008. He has championed the cause of the autonomous administration and the interests of the insured parties for almost three decades, and has continually supported KAN as a project of the VfA and called attention to the value it adds for occupational safety and health.

# Events

**01.-02.10.25** » Berlin
Konferenz
**Durchstarten mit Normung**
DIN
www.din.de/de/mitwirken/young-professionals/durchstarten-mit-normung

**07.10.25** » Berlin
Fachveranstaltung
**14. IDiS-Plenum – SMART Standards**
DIN/DKE
www.din.de/de/din-und-seine-partner/termine

**09.10.25** » Online
Webinar
**Chatbots – Chancen und Gefahren für die Arbeitssicherheit**
AUVA
www.auvkurs.at Chatbots

**14.-16.10.25** » Köln
International Conference (DE/EN)
**EU-Maschinenverordnung mit Maschinenrechtstag**
MBT
www.maschinenrichtlinie.de/fortbildung/konferenzen

**20.-22.10.25** » Sankt Augustin
Seminar
**Grundlagen der Normungsarbeit im Arbeitsschutz**
IAG/KAN
https://asp.veda.net/webgate_dguv_prod 570044

**04.-07.11.25** » Düsseldorf
Messe/Kongress
**A+A 2025**
Messe Düsseldorf/Basi
www.aplusa.de

**12.11.25** » Brüssel/Online
Fachveranstaltung
**Plenary of the Industrial Symbiosis Standardization Roadmap Working Groups**
CEN-CENELEC
https://risers-project.eu/plenary

**17.-18.11.25** » Online
Seminar
**Funktionale Sicherheit im Maschinenbau**
VDI Wissensforum
www.vdi-wissensforum.de/weiterbildung-maschinenbau/funktionale-sicherheit-im-maschinenbau

**17.-19.11.25** » Dresden
Seminar
**Kollege Roboter: Mensch-Maschine-Kollaboration und die Sicherheit bei der Arbeit**
IAG
https://asp.veda.net/webgate_dguv_prod 570164

**04.12.25** » Online
Expert Meeting
**Climate Change Meets Occupational Safety and Health**
BAuA
www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Veranstaltungen/Termine/2025/12.04-Climate-Change-OSH

**08.-11.12.25** » Dresden
Seminar
**M1: Sicherheitstechnik von Maschinen**
IAG
https://dguv.converia.de/frontend/index.php?sub=202

**15.-17.12.25** » Dresden
Seminar
**Manipulation an Maschinen und Anlagen: Risiken erkennen, Maßnahmen ergreifen**
IAG
https://asp.veda.net/webgate_dguv_prod 570089

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