

Overview

New topics for occupational safety and health and standardization

Five examples of debates in which KAN is or will be participating

Addressing of acute safety risks: treatment tables

Treatment tables with electrical height adjustment are used in many physiotherapy practices and hospitals. No standard governing this equipment exists. Numerous accidents, leading to crushing, fractures and even death, have occurred in the past on these tables, often because they were lowered accidentally. This risk is to be eliminated in the future by means of devices for disabling the lowering function. Opinions differ however on how this should be implemented. Large numbers of treatment tables are currently in use. KAN is discussing with all parties involved how safety can be improved by means of standards and upgrades to the devices.

A broad alliance for a topic: non-visual effects of light

Besides being essential for vision, light also has a non-visual effect, for example upon the sleep-wake rhythm. At working premises, preference should always be given to daylight; where daylight is not sufficient however, artificial light is required. Modern lighting systems intentionally have a non-visual effect. They may however disrupt the human body's biological clock. KAN is discussing the non-visual effects of light at the workplace with government authorities, the German Social Accident Insurance, social partners, DIN, the research community, manufacturers and planners.

A new responsibility: IT and product safety

Under the heading of "Safety and security", KAN is addressing the issue of safety-related functions of installations potentially failing as a result of an attack by hackers. By applying the CE mark, manufacturers declare that their machines are safe. Up to now however, this did not include consideration being given to a potential attack upon the IT infrastructure. KAN is discussing with the German Federal Ministry of Labour the extent to which manufacturers applying the mark

must also ensure IT security, and what responsibility must be assumed by companies.

Design plus safety: school satchels

Many satchels fail to satisfy the requirements of the relevant DIN standard because they lack fluorescent areas. The argument is that the orange-red and yellow colours familiar from high-visibility vests are not compatible with a "cool" design. KAN has assisted in revising the standard such that design and visibility requirements can be reconciled. Fluorescent colours such as yellow-green and pink are now also officially permitted. Better visibility makes the journey to school safer for children.

Rules for processes: occupational safety and health management systems

Employers are responsible for organizing occupational safety and health within their companies and incorporating it into the company's structures. Occupational safety and health management systems can provide support in this task. An international standard for these systems appeared last year. Around 70 countries were involved in its development. Many of these countries see a further need for standards, for example providing guidelines concerning mental risks at the workplace. In Germany, this is opposed by companies and also by other OSH stakeholders, who foresee a wave of certification with no added value for occupational safety and health. KAN is monitoring the debates at national and international level.

Further information:

<http://www.kan.de>