

	Health, Safety, Quality and Environmental Alert	Alert number: 46-15	Document Reference: AMG/F/HSQE/001
	RPE – Respiratory Protective Equipment	Issue Date: 30/06/15	Author: Steve Milroy

(To be posted on HSQE Notice Boards for a Period of 1 MONTH from date of issue)

As previously communicated we have used independent exposure monitoring to identify requirements for Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) on our worksites. RPE deemed appropriate for High Output BCS & TRS activities falls under two categories:

- FFP3 face masks (with an assigned protection factor of 20): FFP3 protection offers an adequate level of protection from silica for the majority of people involved with High Output activities.
- Air-fed (powered) respirators: HSE requirements on dust controls (specified by the Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations) state that where a job role is required to rely on RPE for a continuous period of over 1 hour then air-fed respirators should be used.

In alert NWR HO 15/16 004 we stated that it had been identified that, at times, the technicians, works managers and supervisors & certain COSS positions could also be relying on RPE for continuous periods over 1 hour and should be provided with air-fed respirators. We have clarified that this includes the following roles:

- All BCS system operators (with the exception of OP1 cab and Power Car cab – required to wear FFP3)
- D75 operators (with the exception of the cab operator – required to wear FFP3)
- Technicians (required when working at Clamp 2, rear of CM or D75)
- COSS BCS Plant Team
- COSS Tech (Cutter bar)
- COSS D75
- COSS Regulator
- COSS Tamper (when brush-box is being used)
- COSS BDS
- COSS SLSHS
- Works Manager (Production)
- Works Supervisor (Production)
- Systems Manager (Plant)

RPE for those on site in other roles/positions should be managed by maintaining exclusion zones and where required, the use of disposable FFP3 face masks.

Exclusion zones should be maintained around the system. However where this is not possible and people are required to be in the vicinity for short periods of time (not more than 1 continuous hour) they should be provided with and wear a disposable FFP3 face mask. Those relying on FFP3 face masks must have been face- fit tested and arrive for the shift clean shaven.

Visitors to the site should be managed via the process detailed above.

The following principles of control apply:

- 1) Move away from ballast handling activities unless you are directly involved in the task, and encourage others to do the same
- 2) If you are involved in the task, make sure you have received appropriate instruction/training and wear the RPE as you were instructed to do so, so as to not compromise the level of protection
- 3) Notify your supervisor or line manager if you have concerns relating to the condition or effectiveness of your RPE
- 4) Do not eat, drink or smoke near ballast handling activities 5) report high levels of dust and/or poor behaviours to your line manager or by raising a Close Call

The key issue is the requirement for the Systems Manager and Works Manager to agree and sign-off an “Authorisation to Commence Production” before work commences, with all associated staff fully kitted out with the required RPE. If the System of Works Manager answers no to any of the questions then an assessment has to be made before works continue. This should be in conjunction with production and HSEA on-call.

The Works Manager is involved and in close proximity to the core work and has the responsibility to ensure that all staff utilise the RPE as required and mandated on High Output sites throughout the shift. Failure of any operatives to follow the instructions will entail the staff being stood down, re-briefed on the requirements and potentially removed from the work activity.