



## NEW EDITION OF IMAS - CHANGES RELATED TO EYE PROTECTION

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be regarded as the 'last resort' to protect against the effects of mines and ERW hazards. PPE is the final protective measure after all planning, training and procedural efforts have been taken to reduce risks.

The IMAS continues to emphasize that the levels of PPE provided for use in hazardous areas must be decided after making a risk assessment by considering all local risk(s). These include an analysis of operational procedures and tools and local environmental conditions. Different levels of PPE may be appropriate for use during different activities at different parts of a workplace. For example, demining supervisors, team leaders, dog handlers, and visitors who do not engage in prodding or excavation activities may now use eye protection instead of full face protection, which was not possible under the first edition. Even deminers, who are engaged in certain activities, could use eye protection under certain situations, if the field risk assessment and management permit the use of only eye protection.



The new IMAS clarifies “eye protection” as that which is held over the eyes in a frame that prevents blast ingress from beneath. The eye protection shall be capable of retaining integrity against the blast effects of 240 gm of TNT at a distance of 60 cm in the event of an intended explosion, and shall be made of at least 5 mm of untreated polycarbonate. Commonly available industrial safety spectacles do not meet the minimum requirement of this standard and shall not be used as demining PPE .

The minimum acceptable amount of PPE to protect men and women employees of demining organizations against the effects of small blast mines, under the first edition of IMAS on PPE, was the use of body armour (jacket) and full face visor. However, based on a recent decision of the IMAS Review Board representing the mine action community, the minimum acceptable level of PPE is now body armour and eye protection. However, the new IMAS still makes a recommendation that eye protection should be part of a frontal head protection system and provide full frontal coverage of face and throat. The IMAS now allows for the use of both full face visors and eye protection in the hazardous areas."

For further information on International Mine Action Standards, please contact Mr Faiz Paktian, Head of Standards and Quality Management, GICHD at [f.paktian@gichd.org](mailto:f.paktian@gichd.org)