

AS/NZS 1715:2009 Rul 1:2023



STANDARDS
Australia



Ruling to AS/NZS 1715:2009 Selection, use and maintenance of respiratory protective equipment



AS/NZS 1715:2009 Rul 1:2023

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The following are represented on Committee SF-010:

Association of Accredited Certification Bodies
Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council
Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)
Australian Industry Group
Australian Institute of Health & Safety
Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists
Better Regulation Division (Fair Trading, SafeWork NSW, TestSafe)
Composites Australia
Fire and Emergency New Zealand
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Ruling

Enquiry A

Can facial hair interfere with the face seal/sealing surface area for a tight-fitting full facepiece or half facepiece facemasks for respirators including Positive Pressure, Air-Supplied (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) or PAPR (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) respirators?

Ruling A

Yes.

Facial hair can interfere. AS/NZS 1715:2009 provides information regarding facial hair in Clauses 4.4.3.1, 4.5.5.2, 8.3 and B2 to B5 directly applying to the use of a tight-fitting full facepiece or half facepiece facemask for a respirator including positive pressure, air-supplied (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) or PAPR (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) respirators.

Enquiry B

Are there any exemptions allowed in AS/NZS 1715:2009 for the use of a tight-fitting full facepiece or half facepiece facemask for a respirator including positive pressure, air-supplied (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) and PAPR (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) respirators when the wearer has facial hair within the sealing area of the facemask?

Ruling B

No.

There are no exemptions in AS/NZS 1715:2009 to allow for facial hair within the sealing area of the facemask.

Enquiry C

When fit testing a respirator including positive pressure, air-supplied (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) or PAPR (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) tight fitting full facepiece or half facepiece facemask, does this need to be done in negative pressure, i.e. motor turned off or when not under positive pressure?

Ruling C

Yes.

This is done to isolate and test the fit performance of the facepiece to the wearer than the overall effect provided for the facepiece used under positive pressure by the wearer. See Clause 4.4.3.1. See Clause 5.2.4.2 for PAPR positive pressure demand with full facepiece and half facepiece respirators.

Enquiry D

Are there possible changes occurring in the future to Standards to allow the use of a tight-fitting full facepiece or half facepiece facemask for a respirator including positive pressure, air-supplied (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) and PAPR (continuous flow or positive pressure demand) respirators when the wearer has facial hair?

Ruling D

Yes.

Research required

Standards Australia Committee SF-010, Occupational Respiratory Protection, as well as the international Committee ISO/TC 94/SC 15, Respiratory protective devices, are currently discussing and reviewing available information and studies on facial hair and the use of respirators as to whether further changes to the fit testing arrangements and the use of facial hair with respirators can be considered within the appropriate standards. This includes a review of the Singh Thattha (beard wrapping) technique.

Some Australian State Health Departments have adopted use of this technique, and users should consult with their relevant Health Department or Work Health Safety regulator to determine the requirements in their jurisdiction.

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