



PRESS RELEASE

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New SME project on protective equipment and textile care standards

Brussels, January 2018 – Small Business Standards (SBS) is pleased to announce a new sectoral approach aimed at better understanding and meeting standardisation needs for those SMEs which manufacture, distribute and maintain Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), that are products the user can wear or hold, in order to be protected against hazards either at home, at work or whilst engaging in leisure activities. The sectoral approach also includes hygiene and sterilisation services for medical devices like reusable OR textiles. This project brings together two important players, who already collaborate with SBS: the German Textile Care Association (DTV) and SME Safety, the European association of SMEs that manufacture safety products.

Hence, this joint sectoral approach will be part of the 2018 SBS work, which is co-financed by the European Commission and EFTA countries to support European SMEs in standardisation.

It will focus on two issues:

- Ensure SMEs' compliance with European legislation and with relevant harmonised standards, especially in textile care services and protective clothing reprocessing which is often overlooked. However, textile care services (e.g. laundry, dry cleaning etc.) are fundamental to ensure supply, reprocessing and sterilisation of PPE of reusable protective clothing.
- Ensure a smooth transition for SMEs from the regimes of the PPE and Medical Devices Directives to those of the new Regulations, and make certain that PPE manufacturers and Textile Care service providers are adequately represented at European level. Products must conform to the requirements of the new regulations, which they usually do by meeting harmonised European Standards. However, it remains to be seen whether this transition from directives to regulations is SME-friendly.

During the project, DTV and SME Safety will regularly engage with SBS, continuously providing the community with information about standardisation activities and regulatory updates in the field of PPE and Textile Care standardisation, raising matters and animating the debate on relevant issues in the field of sectoral standardisation.

A European workshop on this topic will be organised on November 7th 2018 in Brussels.

END

EDITORS' NOTES: Small Business Standards (SBS) is the association representing European SMEs in the standardisation process. SBS is co-financed by the European Commission and EFTA. Further information: Christel Davidson, Director, +32 (0)2 285 07 15, c.davidson@sbs-sme.eu
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