



PROGRESS IS MADE

Progress after that point wasn't entirely controversy-free, but a standard for clothing which had been submitted by the British Standards Institution (BSI), and which combined the requirements of the remarkably similar Cambridge Standard and test house and Notified Body SATRA's alternative technical specification was used as the basis of the CEN standard for motorcycle clothing. Through a series of separate project groups operated under the control of WG9, a total of eight product standards started to take shape.

In December 1997, the first WG9 standard to appear in print was EN 1621-1 "Motorcyclists protective clothing against mechanical impact - Part 1: Requirements and test methods for impact protectors".

The garment standard EN 13595 "Protective clothing for professional motorcycle riders - Jackets, trousers and one-piece or divided suits" finally appeared during the late summer of 2002. This was divided into four parts: one part covering general requirements and one covering each of the three test methods.

In response to a suggestion by riders' groups - embraced by industry and accepted by the Commission and CEN - the scope of these documents was amended from earlier versions at the eleventh hour to encompass clothing for use by "professional riders" only. Up to that point, the concept of limiting the scope of the standards had never been aired. They were standards intended to specify clothing which would protect the wearer irrespective of the purpose of their use of their motorcycle: private leisure or business use.

This step was taken to provide a barrier to the CEN standards being used as the basis of further legislation making the wearing of approved PPE by leisure motorcyclists compulsory. However, following the implementation of the General Product Safety Directive (GPSD) 2001/95/EC, the "professional use" scope is probably irrelevant, since clause 10 of the GPSD addresses the issue of "migration" of professional status products into non-professional use, as follows:

“Products which are designed exclusively for professional use but have subsequently migrated to the consumer market should be subject to the requirements of this Directive because they can pose risks to consumer health and safety when used under reasonably foreseeable conditions.”

The scopes of footwear standard EN 13634 and glove standard EN 13594 were also amended to cover “professional use” only. These were published at the same time as EN 13595, which was important since the standards shared many common test methods. The subsequent revisions these standards have seen the professional use scope dropped, however, leaving it present only in the garment standard.

The suite of standards from WG9 grew to include EN 1621-2, for back protectors, EN 1621-3, for chest protectors (still in preparation, much-delayed, but possibly nearing publication), EN 1621-4 (body-worn airbag garments, triggered by a physical connection to the motorcycle; published but subject of an early review at the request of the French delegation to WG9) and EN 14021 (Moto-X stone shields). Proposals have recently been aired to develop a further document in the EN 1621 series, to cover body-worn airbag systems which are triggered electronically.

After eleven-and-a-half years of in-committee work, delayed by political lobbying outside of the standards environment, a series of authoritative standards for motorcyclists’ protective clothing and equipment was finally available, with the expectation that these would deliver to the marketplace, and thence the consumer, fit for purpose motorcycle clothing bearing an independent, recognisable mark.

Regrettably that was not to be the case.