



Briefing 16/44 October 2016

Safety helmet colours standard (Highways England)

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in England

For information only to Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

Key Issues:

The purpose of this briefing is to advise APSE members on the introduction of a new standard for the colour coding of safety helmets developed by Build UK (the main umbrella body for contractors) that has been adopted by Highways England.

1.0 Introduction

Highways England recently released a document in September 2016 entitled [‘The Delivery Hub health, safety and environment – Raising the bar 31 – Safety helmet colours’](#) which details the benefits of adopting a common safety helmet colour standard, background information on the different approaches and an outline of the minimum requirements.

They found that while most sites and contractors have a policy on helmet colours, they were often different and this could be considered confusing and, at worst, dangerous (e.g. since this could make it difficult for contractors to identify inexperienced people/visitors and site supervisors).

This standard has been adopted as part of Highways England’s ‘Raising the bar’ initiative, which “aims to identify current health and safety best practice and then define that as the minimum requirement to be implemented on all major projects”.

The standard was originally produced by Build UK in April 2016 and is called the [Safety Helmet Colours Standard](#). An outline of the standard can be found below.

2.0 Build UK / Highways England - Safety helmet standard

Safety helmet standard from 1 January 2017	
 Black Site Supervisors	 Orange Slinger / Signaller
 Blue Inexperienced Person / Visitor	 White General Use (including sites where colour coding impractical), Manager, Client, Competent Operative, Vehicle Marshall (distinguished by the wearing of a different coloured high visibility vest)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective markings and role specific helmet decals are permitted <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>First Aid</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Fire Marshall</p> </div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coloured high visibility vests are permitted to identify other roles e.g. vehicle marshall • Helmets must meet BS EN 397 • Network Rails PPE standard allows only white and blue helmets 	

3.0 APSE Comment

APSE welcomes the introduction of a standard for safety helmet colouring and encourages its members to consider whether the implementation of this safety helmet colour standard would be beneficial for the types of work they undertake.

Garry Lee
 Research & Coordination Officer