

Hi-Visibility Buying Guide

Highways Agency: Chapter 8 Traffic Signs Manual (Part 2) Operations: Para 06.3.2

The workforce and supervisory staff should wear high visibility warning clothing at ALL TIMES when on site. Clothing shall comply with BS EN 471 Table 1, Class 2 or 3 (Class 3 on motorways and other high speed roads) and shall comply with the requirements of paragraph 4.2.3(b) of the Standards. The colour of the clothing shall normally be fluorescent yellow or fluorescent orange-red complying with Table 2 of the Standards.

The retroreflective material shall be to Class 2 as defined in Table 5 of the Standards. In addition, on motorways and other high speed roads, high visibility jackets or coveralls shall have full length sleeves meeting the requirement of paragraph 4.2.4 of BS EN 471. This requirement may be varied to three-quarter-length sleeves where a risk assessment shows full-length sleeves would present increased risk due to the activity being undertaken.

Staff should also wear high visibility trousers complying with Class 1 of BS EN 471 where the carrying of large items of equipment or other activities may at any time obscure the visibility of the high visibility jacket or vest

High Visibility Garments

The requirements & the facts

Being struck by a moving vehicle is the second most common cause of death in the workplace. It is therefore essential that any high visibility garments issued to employees conform to all relevant performance standards (EN 471:2003, European Standard for High Visibility Clothing), and are worn and maintained correctly for maximum protection.

Safety Standards Key

From October 2013 all newly Certificated High Visibility Garments must comply with the NEW Standard, EN ISO 20471:2013



EN471:2003 – High Visibility Warning Clothing

3 classes of protection



EN343 – Protection Against Rain

3 classes of waterproofness and breathability



EN342 – Protection Against Cold

(Temperatures <5°C)



GO/RT 3279:2008 – Approved Garments for Railway Workers

Garment Classifications

Garment types are grouped into three classes based on the conspicuity provided, with the classes dictating the minimum quantities of background and retro-reflective materials to be used.

CLASS 3: Highest Protection Level:

Bands of retro-reflective material shall not be less than 50mm wide. Minimum background material 0.80m². Minimum retro-reflective material 0.20m². A revised version of EN471 was published in March 2004. One of the major changes in this version is that horizontal reflective bands can now have an incline of $\pm 20^\circ$.

CLASS 2: Intermediate Protection Level:

Bands of retro-reflective material shall not be less than 50mm wide. Minimum background material 0.50m². Minimum retro-reflective material 0.13m².

CLASS 1: Lowest Protection Level:

Where enhanced visibility is an advantage, but for minimal risk/off road purposes only. Bands of retro-reflective material shall not be less than 50mm wide. Minimum background material 0.14m². Minimum retro-reflective material 0.10m².