



TESTING OF HIGH-VISIBILITY SAFETY GARMENTS

Background

Safety clothing is becoming a critical aspect of workplace health and safety regulations. In high-risk applications, particularly those involving moving vehicles or machinery, the use of specialty garments that provide high-visibility is essential. There are strict specifications around high-visibility garments to ensure these provide appropriate visibility across different weather conditions and types of work.

The Standard for High-Visibility Safety Garments

AS/NZS 4602.1:2011 is a joint Australian and New Zealand standard covering high visibility safety garments. The Standard outlines the strict design requirements of such garments and also refers to another standard (AS/NZS 1906.4:2010) for the materials that are used in the garments.

Application of the Standard

The Standard specifies:

- the allowable design features;
- the minimum amount and allowable position of background material for the front and back of the garment;
- the minimum amount and allowable position of the retro-reflective tape for the front and back of the garment; and
- how all measurements must be taken.

The design of the garments is based on the need for users to be highly visible regardless of the time of day. Conforming garments have been widely adopted for use in many other situations – farming, building sites, factories, warehouses, and recreational cycling and walking – virtually any situation where there is a need for the wearer to be seen at a distance.



Classes of Garments

There are three classes of garments covered under AS/NZS 4602.1:2011, each relating to the expected application for the garment. These classes are:



- **Class D** - garments designed for daytime use only- these specify acceptable background material but have no retro-reflective elements;
- **Class N** - garments designed for night time use only – the background material is less specific than Class D but must include retro-reflective tape
- **Class DN** - garments designed for day and/or night time use - these are the most common garments and are a combination of compliant background material and retro-reflective tape



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FACT SHEET

Advice on High-Visibility Safety Garment Testing

While AS/NZS 4602.1:2011 relates mainly to garment design requirements, the standard gives important advice on risk assessment, care, maintenance, labeling, selection and safe use. For example, it is imperative that these safety garments are kept clean, dry and inspected regularly to maintain their effectiveness. They must be replaced if they are badly soiled, faded or damaged.

If you are involved with manufacturing, importing or using high-visibility garments and want to ensure the garments are compliant with current standards, contact NZWTA for further assistance.

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