Maritime PPE Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. **Drowning:** Failure to wear life jackets or personal flotation devices (PFDs) can result in drowning incidents if individuals fall overboard or encounter emergencies in the water.
2. **Cold-water injuries:** In cold-water environments, not wearing appropriate immersion suits or anti-exposure suits can lead to hypothermia and cold-related injuries.
3. **Falls from heights:** Not utilizing fall protection equipment, such as safety harnesses and fall arrest systems, can result in falls from elevated working areas. Fall into the water or onto hard surfaces on vessels or offshore platforms.
4. **Head and body injuries:** Failure to wear hard hats or helmets can leave individuals vulnerable to head injuries caused by falling objects, impacts, or collisions.
5. **Eye and face injuries:** Without appropriate eye and face protection, individuals are at risk of sustaining injuries from flying debris, splashes, or chemical hazards. These injuries can range from minor irritations to severe eye damage or blindness.
6. **Respiratory hazards:** Not using respiratory protective equipment in environments with harmful gases, fumes, or airborne particles can lead to respiratory illnesses, chemical exposure, or asphyxiation.
7. **Reduced visibility and communication:** Failure to utilize reflective elements on PFDs or clothing, as well as not using communication devices, can hinder visibility and communication in emergency situations.
8. **Non-compliance with regulations:** Failure to use maritime PPE can result in non-compliance with regulatory requirements and standards specific to the maritime industry.

STATS

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury deaths worldwide. In maritime environments, the failure to wear life jackets or PFDs significantly increases the risk of drowning, especially during boating accidents, falls overboard, or emergencies at sea.

As part of the study, researchers surveyed 354 maritime workers. Among injury risk factors such as age, risk awareness, experience, PPE availability and others, PPE availability "was shown to have the greatest potential to decrease injury probability," the researchers said.

Other findings:

- 14% of the respondents indicated they had suffered at least one injury during their most recent tour of duty.
- 4% reported they had received inadequate PPE training; the injury rate among this group was as much as 33% higher than that of other respondents.
- 18% said their employers did not always share incident lessons with crew members.