

Could you benefit from an integrated safety helmet and visor solution?

An MSA White Paper



WE KNOW WHAT'S AT STAKE.

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Offering various benefits, demand for integrated head and face protection has, arguably, never been so high. It would seem that contractors the world over have begun to recognise the value of equipping workers with fully integrated solutions. With that in mind, there is also the hope that the efficacy and safety of PPE, rather than cost, is placed firmly at the top of the agenda for purchasing policy. Let's take a look at the benefits integrated protection offers and the advantages of choosing greater efficacy and safety over cost.

Practical benefits: a single integrated solution

From a practical workplace perspective, issuing workers with a single integrated safety helmet and visor solution offers several benefits.

Clearly, having one piece of PPE can minimise the risk of a worker leaving an element behind and, as the visor is built into the helmet, face protection is always available and readily pulled down into place whenever needed. Cleaning one piece of PPE can also be easier and more convenient than cleaning separate elements. High-quality helmets with integrated visors are also specially designed to be balanced, thus comfortable for the wearer.

Separate visors can also be more vulnerable to scuffs and damage over time as they are removed and stored. They can also be misplaced or lost. The best integrated designs see the face protection safely retracting upwards into the helmet shell, remaining fully protected when not in use, all while the helmet's shell remains compact.

Then there is the matter of vision, which is crucial considering that 69% of people in the UK, for example, wear corrective glasses. Leading integrated face protection solutions offer over spectacle options which are deep enough to accommodate everyday glasses.

As far as hearing conservation is concerned, high-quality helmets with integrated visors also allow the seamless use of other PPE, like helmet mounted ear-muffs.



Integrated solutions are not created equal

Whilst integrated face protection solutions are clearly highly attractive, it is important to understand that not all are created equal. Legacy integrated solutions over the last 15 years have tended to be heavy, bulky and restrictive, with comfort issues often impeding acceptance by users. But over the last several years, extensive user research coupled with new design approaches has seen the emergence of new, lighter-weight, compact and fully adjustable solutions.

To develop its latest V-Gard® 950 helmet with integrated visor, MSA Safety surveyed and worked with more than 300 end users from construction, utilities, chemical oil & gas, metallurgy and more industries – at every stage of product development.



The results helped define a lightweight design which optimised comfort and everyday practicality. For example, the ability for workers to easily pull down or retract away face protection with one hand whilst wearing gloves. Or the ability, thanks to the Fas-Trac® III suspension lateral adjustment feature, to slide the helmet forward to wear corrective glasses.

Integrated face protection in action: SP Energy Networks

The decision to review and upgrade integrated face protection for employees was one taken by electricity transmission and distribution business, SP Energy Networks. The electricity transmission and distribution company has a workforce of over 3,000, of which 1,800 personnel are issued with different types of PPE.

A variety of employee trades including linesworkers, joiners and fitters require effective protection from a wide range of industrial hazards, such as electrical risks and arc flash, slips, trips and falls, chemicals, biological hazards, eye injuries, falling objects, sharps, repetitive strain injuries, and noise.

Legacy electrician helmets with integrated visors were simply proving too heavy and cumbersome for long term use, so a working group arranged formal trials of various helmets with integrated visors. Following user feedback and consultation with employee groups, the company decided to introduce the V-Gard 950 for live operational duties.

Several design factors influenced the choice. The V-Gard 950 is significantly lighter than other helmets on the market and, coupled with greater adjustability, deemed more comfortable in use. The low-profile design allows linesworkers to manoeuvre freely and readily pull down or retract the arc-rated visor with a gloved hand. A ratchet fastening system and chin strap allows the helmet to stay firmly in place on the head when looking up or down.



The best possible safety and comfort

It is essential that companies take the time to become fully aware of the functional design differences and qualities offered by different brands and products. Recently, we have seen a greater appreciation for the value of full-face integrated protection in many industries, including the construction sector. This shift, combined with regularly reappraising employee protection and making fully informed decisions, will continue to afford workforces in all sectors the best possible safety and comfort at work - both now and in the years to come.

1. *The College of Optometrists, Britain's Eye Health in Focus*

Product focus: V-Gard 950 - features and benefits

- Balanced and lightweight (lightest helmet of its category on the market)
- Low profile: patented visor mechanism - inspired by Gallet F1XF firefighting helmet- minimises helmet shell size
- Integrated premium visor offers the largest face coverage on the market today
- 6-point ratchet suspension for the highest comfort (polyester head straps, low sitting nape strap, large sweatband, and three wearing heights)
- Standard 4-point chinstrap for better helmet retention
- Compatible with helmet-mounted ear defenders
- Standard protective reusable storage bag
- Approved to EN 397 (-30°C, LD, 440 V A.VC, MM); EN 50365 1000 V A.C; EN 166 + GS-ET-29 Class 1: 2C-1,2 1 B 3 8-1-0 9 KN





MSA—The Safety Company

Our business is safety. We've been the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality safety products since 1914. MSA products may be simple to use and maintain, but they're also highly-sophisticated devices and protective gear—the result of countless R&D hours, relentless testing and an unwavering commitment to quality that saves lives and protects millions of hard working men and women each and every day. Many of our most popular products integrate multiple combinations of electronics, mechanical systems and advanced materials to help ensure that users around the world remain protected in even the most hazardous of situations.

Our Mission

MSA's mission is to see to it that men and women may work in safety and that they, their families and their communities may live in health throughout the world.

MSA: WE KNOW WHAT'S AT STAKE.

Note: This Bulletin contains only a general description of the products shown. While product uses and performance capabilities are generally described, the products shall not, under any circumstances, be used by untrained or unqualified individuals. The products shall not be used until the product instructions/user manual, which contains detailed information concerning the proper use and care of the products, including any warnings or cautions, have been thoroughly read and understood. Specifications are subject to change without prior notice.

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