

A CANADIAN STANDARD FOR CBRN PROTECTION FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

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Currently there are no standards in Canada that provide first responders the information and guidance necessary to ensure that appropriate protective equipment is selected and used in Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) terrorism events. As a result since late 2007 a standard entitled Protection of First Responders from CBRN Events has been under development under the auspices of the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) involving participation from all relevant stakeholders including the responder organizations the various levels of government manufacturers and research and testing organizations. The proposed standard will apply to Official First Responder groups (police fire fighters emergency medical services) in Canada and will be of interest to other groups. It addresses both CBRN release events and events in which contagion is spread from person to person in both response and intervention phases the zones in which responders operate their roles and concomitant work rates and required duration of use. It specifies requirements for protective CBRN equipment (respiratory protection and whole-body protection/ clothing) that can be used by First Responders to meet their needs as well as identifying capabilities and limitations of other equipment that is currently used. It emphasizes the importance of equipment integration and assessing the performance of full systems in simulated conditions of use. The standard is anticipated to be finalized in 2009; public comment on the draft is now being reviewed.