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WELDING OF THERMOPLASTICS – MACHINES AND EQUIPMENT

Background

There has been exhaustive discussion by the IFPA membership on the matter of butt welding machines and the use of chains as the clamping device in such equipment. After careful consideration of every bodies input, a comprehensive examination of the applicable standards and with due consideration of what IFPA as an organization wants to achieve, the following statement is set out as the associations official stance on the matter.

Standards

The association agrees that the minimum standard that shall be achieved by its members is compliance with the requirements of the SANS 1671 group of standards. Furthermore, it was agreed that the association should aspire to the adoption and implementation, by its members, of the applicable ISO 12176 Part 1 standard which is more particular and stringent in its requirements ensuring better quality control and thereby weld security.

In SANS 1671-1:2007 Welding of thermoplastics – Machine and equipment. Part 1 – Heated-tool welding:

Clause 4.2 Clamping devices, does not prohibit the use of any type of clamping device, including chains, on certain conditions that are set out therein.

Clause 6.1.2 Clamping devices, Clause 6.1.3 Rigidity of guiding and clamping devices and Clause 6.1.4 Method of testing the rigidity of guiding and clamping devices, do prohibit the use of chains because they are unable to meet the requirements as set out therein.

IFPA Policy

It is the policy of the association to not recommend the use of chain clamping devices and furthermore to urge any of its members to phase out as quickly as possible any such machines they have. Furthermore, IFPA will engage with the SABS to revise SANS 1671-1 to be more specific in its requirements, as in ISO 12176, thereby specifically excluding the use of chain clamping devices.