

Here is a rough overview of the German/UK safety classifications for rigging including motors and hoists. The majority of ASM band & chain products meet all of the C1 – or higher- standards...indeed Moses Sowka is on the committee that writes and sets the overall standards.

There are countless sub-classifications and one in particular – **AK5** – relates to the overall rig including control and as far as we are aware, ASM remain the only manufacturer of fully compliant equipment.

German version

In order to help with liability insurance problems the Germans produced a code of practice for rigging called VBG-70. This was recently updated & renamed **BGV-C1**.

In short what it meant was that insurance companies could say to customers "unless you follow BGV-C1 we won't insure you or your premiums will be higher". It isn't law that you have to use C1, however it might as well be as pretty much no insurance companies will touch you in a German speaking country now unless you follow it. It is also being adopted in other countries as no other similar codes exist that allow them to beat their insurance down.

The code is not just for chain hoists but all elements of a flown structure (truss, motor control, etc.).

With regards to chain hoists, C1 means that you can move a structure over peoples heads, without having to have a separate safety system. For instance you could have a moving truss grid doing its thing over a performers head, a la every 1980's metal outfit....

In order to meet C1 a chain hoist must have the following features:

Double independent brake

10:1 Safety factor (A normal chain hoist is 5:1)

4 Position limit switch (2 working, 2 emergency)

If the hoist is lifting an object in unison with another hoist or hoists then it must be fitted with a device capable of detecting a slack chain (i.e. when the hoist is not pulling its weight)

We cannot self certify an object to C1, it has to be done by a qualified third party, such as TUV.

As well as the hoist, the control system must also be compliant of C1 (which means a whole load of other requirements, especially those needed to monitor the extra features of the hoist).

As well as C1 we also have another code, BGV-D8. This is the code that a "standard" hoist is rated at. This allows you to lift a structure into place, however it must be secured once in position & during the lifting operation all persons should be removed from the danger area.

There are also discussions at the moment to produce another code, BGV-D8+ which will allow a static structure to be flown over people without a safety. This is different to C1 which allows you to move the structure over their heads.

We will also receive an official English translation of BGV-C1 from the Berufsgenossenschaft who wrote & publish it. This may take a longer time to get (I have been told to expect at least a couple of months) as this is a bigger ship to turn.

The Brits are coming up to speed now, with the new BS 7906 Part 1, which is about to be launched

If you want to see an example of what happens when you get this stuff wrong, go to;

<http://www.roadie.net/trussfrance.htm>