



## Open letter from our Managing Director

# This is about face masks

This will merely take 5 minutes of your time, but then you will know everything you need to know.

Can we still supply you with protective masks?

The answer is: yes!

### But only according to the real fair story

Unfortunately it cannot be in short, but it does accurately reflect the situation.

Theo M.L. de Vliegh  
Managing Director

### An introduction

- TRITAL Safety B.V. Rotterdam is a wholesaler of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that has existed since 1986.
- ROOTS for Safety B.V. Rotterdam has existed since 2011 and is a producer of protective workwear. Rotterdam is the head office. ROOTS supplying various European countries. ([see attachment](#))
- ROOTS for Safety Suzhou ([see attachment](#)) is our office in Mainland China. Roots has had an office in China since the beginning, where 4 people guarantee the quality of our productions under the inspiring leadership of a Fleming who is employed by our company.
- ROOTS for Safety Hong Kong Ltd. ([see attachment](#)), was established to serve Middle Eastern customers.



Rotterdam, NL



Suzhou, CN



Hong Kong, HK

#### Our worldwide offices

Rotterdam (NL) - Headquarters, Sales, Marketing, R&D, Support  
Suzhou (CN) - Quality Control, Sourcing, R&D  
Hong Kong (HK) - Financial

## The demand for masks

The demand for face masks has skyrocketed from all over the world meaning established, well-known manufacturers are not and will not be able to meet the overwhelming demand.

The only solution to solve these deficits is in China and nowhere else.

The only annoying thing is that since April 2, China has withdrawn all export licenses for ALL so-called N95 FFP2 + A1 masks that do not meet the European standard EN 149.

Practically speaking that China is locked for ALL masks that could be executed until April 2.

I do not think I need to explain what the consequences of this decision will be for our people in healthcare.

## How did it all get this way

When China was hit by the COVID-19 crisis, there was a huge demand for mouth masks for its own needs. Mask factories were immediately set up, producing tens of millions of mouth masks per day in little to no time. At that time, there was also an export ban on all respiratory protection.

Then Italy was struck - Europe came face to face with COVID-19 and immediately there were shortages of masks. All European respiratory protection productions (a handful) were "seized" by governments.

## But yes - masks had to come - China of course - where else?

However... there was (and still is) one huge bump that had to be overcome. The inspection and certification of a PPE - in this case an FFP2 mask - takes anywhere from one and a half to two years from start to finish. In other words - the only Chinese FFP2 mask manufacturers producing certified EN149 masks did this long before COVID-19 was mentioned.

In common language meaning that... 95% (perhaps more) of all masks that come from China are currently not certified according to EN 149.

Not being European certified simply means that it may not be sold.

So there was / is a problem!

We urgently need masks, but they could not be sold, because according to our European rules they cannot be put on the market.

Please note; respiratory protection belongs to the highest class in PPE; class 3.

A solution had to be devised!

## What I'm going to do now is speculate, but I dare to do this.

Italy had to have mouth masks, but it needed to be CE approved.

ECM is a very large Italian Notified Body with worldwide representation; also in Shanghai. This Notified Body suddenly assigned 'out of the blue' enormous amounts of so-called 'Declarations of Conformity' to numerous Chinese mask factories, so that suddenly the European (read: Italian) market could be provided with CE-approved masks.

Anyone with a little understanding of personal protective equipment knows that this hastily rigged story is no good for the following reasons.

1. ECM has no accreditation to provide these products with a declaration of conformity.
2. A Declaration of Conformity is normally issued by the manufacturer of the personal protective equipment.
3. A declaration of conformity can only be issued on the basis of a proper product certificate.

Below are some examples of ECM's Declarations of Conformity.



## All bets are off

ECM's Declarations of Conformity have opened up European markets to uncertified Chinese face masks. All parties clung (against better judgment?) to the worthless Italian papers.

A kind of twilight zone - we have to have face masks - so we pretend that we don't know that it is actually no good.

## This has ended since April 2.

If there is one thing that the Chinese government cannot tolerate, it is reputation damage. I know from our office in China that the 600,000 rejected face masks in the Netherlands were big news. TNO had proven that the mouth masks did not meet the EN 149 FFP2 + A1.

Yeah duh ... what did you expect from non-certified products. Since April 2, China has firmly closed its export borders to all mouth masks that are not actually certified by a European Notified Body.

This brings the gray import of fake CE-approved mouth masks to an end.

And that basically means that the scarcity of mouth masks that was already great is only going to get more imminent.

## Is there a solution? YES

But that requires us all to stop “dishonest” stories and face reality.

## What, then, is reality?

Actually very simple:

**Option 1** – There are no EN 149 masks and these masks no longer can be supplied.

**Option 2** – Accept Chinese products that only carry the Chinese label.

The first needs no explanation.

The second needs explanation.

Chinese masks can indeed be certified, but according to Chinese methodology. The mouth masks then fall under the Chinese label KN95 (see [certificates](#)).

The Chinese mouth masks are protective products and they are indeed certified, but not according to EN149, but according to KN95. In our experience, always better than a mask made by a curtain factory (no matter how good the intention is).

Would this be useful to us in the United Kingdom? Until recently not. However; the Government also understands that the mantra “it must be EN149” can no longer be maintained.

Governments from around the world are lifting these certification demands, lead by the [Dutch](#) and [United States](#) Governments. Meaning that it gives you the space to shop ‘outside’ the EN standard. The government makes a sensible decision with this. It is better to be crystal clear and clear about what is being bought than to offer something that is not in line with the European EN149 standard.

Below is a table where the differences between the test methods of KN95 and EN149.

	FFP2 (EN 149)	KN95 (GB2626)
Filter performance	≥ 94%	≥ 95%
Test agent	NaCl and paraffin oil	NaCl
Flow rate	95 L/min	85 L/min
Total inward leakage (TIL) - tested on human subjects each performing exercises	≤ 8% leakage (arithmetic mean)	≤ 8% leakage (arithmetic mean)
Inhalation resistance - max. pressure drop	≤ 70 Pa (at 30 L/min), ≤ 240 Pa (at 95 L/min), ≤ 500 Pa (clogging)	≤ 350 Pa
Flow rate	Varies - see above	85 L/min
Exhalation resistance - max. pressure drop	≤ 300 Pa	≤ 250 Pa
Flow rate	160 L/min	85 L/min
Exhalation valve leakage requirement	N/A	Depressurization to 0 Pa ≥ 20 sec
Force applied	N/A	-1.180 Pa
CO2 clearance requirement	≤ 1%	≤ 1%

Source:

### Extra comments:

Reusable products are also subjected to cleaning, storage and mandatory clogging resistance tests (clogging is optional for non reusable products).

D marking to specify that the face pieces meets the clogging resistance requirements and then it offers an high level of filtering efficiency also in very dusty environments.



[Download certification](#)

[www.roots-original.com/corona](http://www.roots-original.com/corona)

KN95 mask

## How could you get your masks?

Our companies are in a rather unique position that we have offices in both Mainland China and Hong Kong. We have already been able to organize with our office in Suzhou that we have export permits for 3 types of masks:

1. The KN95 mask (until recently offered all over the world as the EN149 FFP2 + A1 mask).
2. The medical mask type IIR with BFE 98%
3. The medical mask non-sterile

You may buy these mouth masks from our company ROOTS for Safety Hong Kong Ltd. Do not that stock of the aforementioned masks will differ per day as the influx for masks is tremendous.

The production time is 2 days (this applies to orders up to 200,000 pieces, after consultation). This means that we can deliver face masks within 5 days if not in stock.

## Payment and guarantees:

We understand that payment may be the a big bump to take.

We want to take over this risk from you.

In China it is normal use (even when COVID-19 did not yet exist) that the deposit is paid on order and the remainder on delivery. That is certainly no different (we even know stories of 100% prepayment today - we will never begin on such endeavours).

It is completely impossible for us to pre-finance orders until delivery, thus today we ask you for a 50% down payment.

Those are risks you don't want to take.

**To break through this stalemate, ROOTS for Safety B.V. in Rotterdam is prepared to guarantee your 50% down payment in the unlikely event that the goods cannot be delivered.**

## Attachments:

*Click on the documents below to open:*

[Uittreksel handelsregister 14-5-2019, ROOTS for Safety 50980319.pdf](#)

[ROOTS for Safety HK Certified Extract CR 26 March 2020.pdf](#)

[Uittreksel ROOTS Suzhou.pdf](#)

## Need to talk to an expert?

We love to make a complicated topic easy to comprehend.

Give our Sales Manager, Marco Kremers, a call on

+31 (0)6 5142 5353 or send an email: [marco@roots-original.com](mailto:marco@roots-original.com).

**Call +31 (0)6 5142 5353**

