



## **Fire Industry Association**

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# **THE PRESSURE EQUIPMENT REGULATIONS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Government has enacted Statutory Instrument 1999 number 2001, entitled "Health & Safety – The Pressure Equipment Regulations 1999".

These are the UK Regulations that introduce the requirements of the Pressure Equipment Directive into UK law. Copies of the Regulations are obtainable from the Stationery Office, price £7.30 plus postage and packing of £1.76.

These Regulations relate to the assurance of the safety of new pressure equipment and the requirements relating to it being made available for sale.

## **IMPLEMENTATION DATES**

The Pressure Equipment Regulations were laid before Parliament on July 19<sup>th</sup> 1999 and some of the Regulations came into force on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 1999. The remaining Regulations, which include those directly affecting FETA members, came into force on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 1999.

Between 29<sup>th</sup> November 1999 and the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2002 inclusive, transition arrangements apply whereby pressure equipment placed on the market during that period may either meet the Pressure Equipment Regulations, or those provisions in force on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1999.

From the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2002 pressure equipment must meet the requirements of the Pressure Equipment Regulations.

## **FIRE EXTINGUISHING EQUIPMENT COVERED BY THE PRESSURE EQUIPMENT REGULATIONS**

Fire extinguishing equipment included within the Regulations includes the following:

- all portable fire extinguishers, including CO<sub>2</sub> extinguishers
- the pipework, fixed and flexible, for fire extinguishing hose reel assemblies and feed pipes
- the pipework and manifolds of gaseous fixed fire extinguishing systems

The following qualifications relate to these products:

1. Equipment placed on the market prior to the 29<sup>th</sup> November 1999 is excluded from the requirements of the Regulations and conformity with the requirements is optional during the transition period ending on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2002.
2. Certain lower limits are defined for water and gas pipework which may in reality minimise the impact of the Regulations for pipework associated with hose reels and fixed gaseous installations.

### **COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

Portable fire extinguishers, compliant with the relevant part of the revised BS EN3 standard and tested as compliant by a Notified Body, e.g., BSI, are likely to meet the requirements of the Pressure Equipment Regulations when they are CE Marked.

Part 9 of the revised BS EN3 covers the requirements for CO<sub>2</sub> extinguishers and Part 8 covers other types of extinguishers.

It is possible that other portable fire extinguishers, not compliant with EN3, may meet the essential safety requirements of the Pressure Equipment Regulations. If such extinguishers are found to be compliant by a Notified Body they can also be CE Marked.

While it has been agreed by the European Commission that all portable fire extinguishers, including CO<sub>2</sub> extinguishers, are covered by the Pressure Equipment Regulations, it is important to note that extinguishers with a mass which is equal or greater than 23 Kg and / or a working pressure equal or greater than 25 bar at 60<sup>o</sup> C are also partly covered by the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations which relate to their safety in use and the Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Receptacles Regulations (CDGCPL2).

### **ONGOING MAINTENANCE OF EXTINGUISHERS**

One of the requirements relating to the CE marking of extinguishers is that they are supplied with appropriate maintenance information. That which is recommended within the revised BS5306-3 is likely to be considered adequate for portable extinguishers.

Note: For CO<sub>2</sub> extinguishers the maintenance will need to include a pressure test, the first of which will be required ten years after initial supply. While not part of the Pressure Equipment Regulations, this is a statutory requirement of the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000. This testing will need to be undertaken by "Competent Persons" normally operating within a Scheme accredited by UKAS to EN45004.

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q1** *What is meant by "placed on the market"?*

A1 This normally means that the completed product has passed through the "factory gate" and has effectively been introduced into the commercial supply chain.

**Q2** *Do factory re-conditioned portable extinguishers need to meet the new Regulations?*

A2 If the extinguishers have previously been in service as non CE marked products, compliant with provisions in force on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 1999, then they can be supplied to any customer until May 29<sup>th</sup> 2002.

As the Regulations only apply to new products, fire extinguishers which were originally supplied to a customer on or before May 29<sup>th</sup> 2002 and are not CE marked as compliant with the requirements of the Regulations may be repaired and / or refurbished and again placed on the market on or after May 30<sup>th</sup> 2002. This applies to the United Kingdom and, with some additional limitations, in other EU countries.

**Q3** *During the transition period ending on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2002, is it acceptable for customers to specify CE marked portable extinguishers and other products covered by the Regulations?*

A3 Customers are at liberty to specify CE marked products however in the earlier stages of the transition period there will be very few products available that are CE marked. As such, these customers will be very limited for choice.

**Q4** *Are wheeled fire extinguishers included within the Pressure Equipment Regulations?*

A4 It is anticipated that they will eventually be covered by the Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive and excluded from the Pressure Equipment Regulations. If they have a mass of at least 23 Kg and / or a working pressure of at least 25 bar at 60<sup>o</sup> C they will presently be covered by the CDGCPL2 Regulations.

**Q5** *Will the CE mark replace other third party certification marks on portable fire extinguishers?*

A5 It is important to note that the CE Mark is not a quality mark. In relation to the Pressure Equipment Regulations it only signifies that the product meets essential safety requirements in relation to its pressurisation. The recognised quality marks e.g. the BAFE mark, BSI kitemark and the LPCB mark should continue to be recognised as the appropriate quality marks.

**Q6** *Where can I obtain further information?*

- The Pressure Systems Safety Regulations - obtainable from the Stationery Office.  
Telephone Orders: 0870 600 5522. Fax: 0870 6005533. E-mail: [book.orders@theso.co.uk](mailto:book.orders@theso.co.uk)
- Approved Code of Practice for the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations prepared by HSE and entitled "Safety of Pressure Systems" ISBN 0-7176-1767X-L122. Obtainable from the Stationery Office.
- The Department of Trade and Industry booklet entitled "Pressure Equipment - Guidance Notes on the UK Regulations" Reference URN 99/1147.  
Telephone: 0870 1502 500. Fax: 0870 1502 100.  
E-mail: [dtipubs@echristian.co.uk](mailto:dtipubs@echristian.co.uk)
- The European Commission "Guide to the implementation of Directives based upon New Approach and Global Approach" - obtainable from EOTC Info-services.  
E-mail: [helpdesk@eotc.be](mailto:helpdesk@eotc.be) or downloadable from their website: [www.eotc.be](http://www.eotc.be)

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## **DISCLAIMER**

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