



GUIDANCE NOTES - RoHS

Background

The RoHS Directive - Restriction of the use of certain Hazardous Substances – has a simple objective - to restrict the use of six substances within electrical and electronic equipment to contribute to protection of health and the environment.

In force from 1st July 2006, it prohibits new electrical and electronic equipment in the marketplace containing more than agreed levels of lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, polybrominated biphenyl (PBB) and polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) flame retardants.

In the case of cables, a number of the products prohibited have traditionally been used as components or raw materials in the manufacture of insulation and sheathing.

The Directive affects manufacturers, sellers, distributors and recyclers of electrical and electronic equipment.

Our Guidance

We have been considering the issues around RoHS for some time and on behalf of the cables and related industries, we have introduced a new scheme.

The Eco-Green Management Scheme is designed as an add-on to existing BASEC ISO 9001 or BA 2250 certification. It is aimed at the procurement, production and record management aspects of cable manufacture.

The scheme allows manufacturers to demonstrate that they have effective systems in place to verify the absence of the designated hazardous substances from their products.

It consequently makes a valuable contribution to ensuring compliance with RoHS, providing assurance for manufacturers' customers.

For clarity, the RoHS Directive defines electrical and electronic equipment as 'equipment that is dependant on electric currents or electromagnetic fields to work properly and equipment for the generation, transfer and measurement of such currents and fields.'

Although RoHS is a European Union (EU) Directive, manufacturers outside Europe must also abide by this legislation if the equipment they produce is ultimately imported into a EU member state.

There are eight broad categories:

- Large household appliances
- Small household appliances
- IT & telecommunications equipment
- Consumer equipment
- Lighting equipment
- Electrical & electronic tools
- Toys, leisure and sports equipment
- Automatic dispensers
- Electric light bulbs & household luminaires

The DTI has appointed the National Weights and Measures Laboratory as the UK's RoHS Enforcement Body.

In Summary

The role of RoHS is to reduce harmful substances at source, ensuring that these hazardous substances are not leached into the environment by equipment which is often not recycled.

The new legislation prevents new electrical and electronic equipment onto the market containing more than agreed levels of these substances.

BASEC is taking action to address this issue, and through the new BASEC Eco Green Management Scheme, we can ensure that the implications of this legislation are professionally covered for everyone's sake.

Contact

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