

F-GAS

S U P P O R T

Promoting Compliance with F Gas and Ozone Regulations

The F Gas Regulation An update on progress towards personnel and Company Certification By F-Gas Support on behalf of DEFRA

The EU F gas regulatory framework requires businesses carrying out installation, maintenance or servicing of equipment that contains or is designed to contain F gases to hold a certificate to confirm that it has the skilled personnel and equipment to carry out work with adequate expertise so that emissions are avoided/minimised.

Three organisations have been appointed under the domestic F gas Regulations to act as certification bodies to issue Company Certificates to businesses¹ undertaking the relevant activities on stationary refrigeration, air-conditioning and heat pump (RAC) equipment.

Since there was no legal requirement for businesses to be certificated in the UK prior to the EU Regulation, the Government provided for transitional arrangements in the domestic Regulations allowing certification bodies to issue “interim” certificates to businesses. An interim Company Certificate has been a legal requirement since July 2009. In line with the EU requirements, businesses holding an interim certificate then have until July 2011 to obtain a full certificate.

It is now less than a year until all businesses affected must hold a full Company Certificate. So, how are businesses progressing in achieving this goal?

Since 2007 we have handled over 6,000 queries on the F-Gas Support help line and a substantial number of these have been in relation to how to gain a Company Certificate and attaining appropriate personnel qualifications. Queries come from both engineers and businesses. Both are concerned that their business holds a valid Company Certificate and engineers gain the correct qualifications. Indeed there are also large numbers of enquiries from end users eager to ensure that they understand the paperwork they need to have in place to ensure their compliance with the legislation.

Originally we estimated that around 20,000 engineers, working for around 5,000 businesses would ultimately need to gain the new personnel qualifications which would enable these businesses to register for full Company Certification. Since then almost 7,000 engineers have gained either the City & Guilds 2079 qualification or the Construction Skills CITB J11-J14 equivalent. This has allowed around 500 businesses to gain a full Company Certificate to date. A further 4,000 businesses currently hold an interim Company Certificate.

There are still some businesses that are belatedly realising that they should already hold either an interim or full Company Certificate. Since July 2009 it has been an offence to carry out installation or maintenance activities on RAC equipment containing F gas refrigerants without holding an interim or full Company Certificate. F-Gas Support and the Regulators are investigating non-compliance with this requirement.

The certification bodies will be busy over the next 10 months processing applications from the 4,000 businesses currently holding an interim Company Certificate as they must all comply by holding a full Company Certificate by July 2011.

¹ The term business refers to a legal entity; this includes companies, organisations, sole traders, charities, schools, universities, hospitals etc.

To obtain a full Company Certificate, businesses must ensure that all of their engineers hold one of the following new qualifications:

- City & Guilds 2079 or
- CITB J11 -12 or
- an equivalent European qualification.

Given the number of engineers that we estimate currently still need to qualify, we can expect to see high demand for these courses over the next 10 months. Businesses should act as soon as possible to get their personnel appropriately qualified and ensure compliance by July 2011. In our work with major end users we are already seeing pressure emerging to ensure their contractors already hold full Company Certification to ensure compliance with F gas Regulation and other green credentials.

Once all the engineers are qualified businesses must then apply to one of the certification bodies to gain a Company Certificate:

Refcom: Website: www.refcom.org.uk, Tel: 01768 860409
Quidos: Website: <http://fgasregister.com>, Tel: 01225 318400
Bureau Veritas: Website: www.bureauveritas.co.uk/fgas, Tel: 0207 661 0726

If you are still uncertain as to your obligations or have any other general queries related to the EC F gas and Ozone Regulations you should contact:

F-Gas Support: Website: www.defra.gov.uk/fgas, Helpline: 0161 874 3663 or Email: fgas-support@enviros.com



How to Contact F-Gas Support:

Telephone Help Line: 0161 874 3663 **Website:** www.defra.gov.uk/fgas

Email: fgas-support@enviros.com **Post:** F-Gas Support, P O Box 481, Salford, M50 3UD