
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations supersede and consolidate the Ionising Radiations Regulations 1985 and the Ionising Radiations (Outside Workers) Regulations 1993.

The Regulations impose duties on employers to protect employees and other persons against ionising radiation arising from work with radioactive substances and other sources of ionising radiation and also impose certain duties on employees.

The Regulations implement in part as respects Great Britain provisions of—

- (a) Council Directive 96/29/Euratom (OJNo. L159, 29.6.96, p.1) laying down basic safety standards for the protection of the health of workers and the general public against the dangers arising from ionising radiation;
- (b) Council Directive 90/641/Euratom (OJ No. L349, 13.12.90, p.23) on the operational protection of outside workers exposed to the risk of ionising radiation during their activities in controlled areas;
- (c) Council Directive 97/43/Euratom (OJ No. L180, 9.7.97, p.22) on health protection of individuals against the dangers of ionising radiation in relation to medical exposure.

The Regulations are divided into 7 Parts.

Part I (Interpretation and General—Regulations 1–4)

The Regulations define the terms used in and the scope of the Regulations. For the purposes of the Regulations, an employer includes a self-employed person and an employee includes a self-employed person and a trainee.

Part II (General principles and procedures—Regulations 5–12)

The Regulations—

- (a) prohibit the carrying out of specified practices without the authorisation of the Health and Safety Executive (“the Executive”);
- (b) require specified work with ionising radiation to be notified to the Executive;
- (c) require radiation employers to make a prior assessment of the risks arising from their work with ionising radiation, to make an assessment of the hazards likely to arise from that work and to prevent and limit the consequences of identifiable radiation accidents;
- (d) require radiation employers to take all necessary steps to restrict so far as is reasonably practicable the extent to which employees and other persons are exposed to ionising radiation;
- (e) require respiratory protective equipment used in work with ionising radiation to conform with agreed standards and require all personal protective equipment and other controls to be regularly examined and properly maintained;
- (f) impose limits (specified in Schedule 4) on the doses of ionising radiation which employees and other persons may receive;
- (g) require in certain circumstances the preparation of contingency plans for radiation accidents which are reasonably foreseeable.

Part III (Arrangements for the management of radiation protection—Regulations 13–15)

The Regulations require that radiation employers consult radiation protection advisers in respect of matters specified in Schedule 5 and that employers ensure that adequate information, instruction and training is given to employees and other persons. Employers are required to co-operate by exchanging information to enable compliance by others with requirements to limit the exposure of employees to ionising radiation.

Part IV (Designated areas—Regulations 16–19)

The Regulations—

- (a) provide that areas in which persons need to follow special procedures to restrict exposure or in which persons are likely to receive more than specified doses of ionising radiation be designated as controlled or supervised areas;
- (b) restrict entry into controlled areas to specified persons and circumstances;
- (c) require radiation employers to set out appropriate local rules for controlled or supervised areas and to appoint radiation protection supervisors for the purpose of securing compliance with the Regulations;
- (d) impose specified duties upon employers in relation to outside workers;
- (e) require radiation levels to be monitored in controlled or supervised areas and provide for the maintenance and testing of monitoring equipment.

Part V (Classification and monitoring of persons—Regulations 20–26)

The Regulations require that employees who are likely to receive more than specified doses of ionising radiation be designated as classified persons, that doses received by classified persons be assessed by one or more dosimetry services approved by the Executive and that records of such doses are made and kept for each such person.

The Regulations also provide for—

- (a) certain employees to be subject to medical surveillance;
- (b) any cases in which an employee has received an overexposure to be investigated and notified to the Executive;
- (c) investigations to be made where employees are exposed above specified levels;
- (d) modified dose limits for employees who have received an overexposure.

Part VI (Arrangements for the control of radioactive substances, articles and equipment—Regulations 27–33)

The Regulations—

- (a) require that where a radioactive substance is to be used as a source of ionising radiation, it should, whenever reasonably practicable, be in the form of a sealed source and that any articles embodying or containing radioactive substances are suitably designed, constructed, maintained and tested;
- (b) cover the accounting for, keeping and moving of radioactive substances and require that incidents in which more than specified quantities of radioactive substances escape or are lost or stolen be notified to the Executive;
- (c) impose duties on manufacturers etc. and installers of articles for use in work with ionising radiation to ensure that such articles are designed, constructed and installed so as to restrict, so far as is reasonably practicable, exposure to ionising radiation;

- (d) impose similar duties upon employers in relation to equipment used for medical exposures together with additional duties in relation to the testing and safe operation of such equipment;
- (e) require employers to investigate any defect in medical equipment which may have resulted in a person receiving a dose of ionising radiation much greater than was intended and to notify the Executive of such incidents;
- (f) prohibit interference with sources of ionising radiation.

Part VII (Duties of employees and miscellaneous—Regulations 34–41)

The Regulations impose duties upon employees engaged in carrying out work with ionising radiation. The Regulations also—

- (a) provide for the approval of dosimetry services by the Executive;
- (b) provide for a defence on contravention of certain regulations;
- (c) provide for exemptions to be granted by the Executive;
- (d) extend the provision of the Regulations outside Great Britain;
- (e) contain transitional provisions; and
- (f) introduce modifications relating to the Ministry of Defence.

The Regulations make consequential amendments to the enactments specified in Schedule 9 and revoke (with savings) the Ionising Radiations Regulations 1985 and the Ionising Radiations (Outside Workers) Regulations 1993.

A copy of the regulatory impact assessment prepared in respect of these Regulations can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive, Economic Adviser's Unit, Rose Court, 2 Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HS. A copy has been placed in the Library of each House of Parliament.