

1987 No. 310

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES**Weights and Measures (Weights) Regulations
(Northern Ireland) 1987***Made* 24th July 1987*Coming into operation in accordance with Regulation 1*

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The Department of Economic Development, in exercise of the powers conferred by Articles 9(1) and (3) and 13(1) of the Weights and Measures (Northern Ireland) Order 1981(a) and now vested in it(b) and of every other power enabling it in that behalf, hereby makes the following Regulations:—

PART I

GENERAL

Citation, commencement and revocation

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Weights and Measures (Weights) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987 and shall come into operation as follows—

- (a) all Regulations except Regulations 1(4) and 13, on 1st September 1987; and
- (b) Regulations 1(4) and 13, on 1st September 1988.

(2) Subject to paragraph (3), the Regulations specified in Schedule 5, with the exception of Regulation 12 of the Weights and Measures (Weights) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1971(c), are hereby revoked.

(3) Part II of, and Schedule 3 to, the Weights and Measures (Weights) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1971 shall continue to have effect until 1st September 1988 in so far as they are necessary for the purposes of Regulation 12 of those Regulations.

(4) Regulation 12 of the Weights and Measures (Weights) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1971 shall be revoked with effect from 1st September 1988.

Interpretation

2.—(1) In these Regulations—

“analogue” means capable of assigning any value or position within a continuous range;

“appropriate local or working standard weights” means the Northern Ireland local standards or working standards of weights specified in column 2 of the Table in Schedule 3 in the case of the weights specified in column 1;

“digital” means capable of assigning only certain discrete values or positions within a continuous range by a series of discontinuous steps;

(a) S.I. 1981/231 (N.I. 10)

(b) By S.I. 1982/846 (N.I. 11) Art. 4

(c) S.R. & O. (N.I.) 1971 No. 342 as amended by S.R. 1977 No. 136

“discrimination threshold” means, in the case of testing equipment with a digital indicator, the weight which produces a change of reading of one digit, and in the case of testing equipment with an analogue indicator, the weight which produces a 1 mm apparent movement of the pointer;

“the Order” means the Weights and Measures (Northern Ireland) Order 1981;

“prescribed limits of error” in relation to weights has the meaning set out in Regulation 10;

“repeatability” means the ability of weighing equipment to indicate, under defined conditions of use, closely similar quantities on repeated weighings; and

“the stamp” means the stamp prescribed by the Weights and Measures (Prescribed Stamp) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1969(a).

(2) The symbols for, and abbreviations of, units of weight and of measurement used in these Regulations refer to the relevant units as set out in Schedule 1.

Application

3.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), these Regulations shall apply to all weighing equipment for use for trade of the following class, namely weights, and such weights are hereby prescribed for the purposes of Article 9(1) of the Order.

(2) These Regulations shall not apply to—

- (a) weights for use only for weighing coins or currency notes for the purpose of determining their number;
- (b) proportional weights or proportional counterpoises used through a system of levers on graduated non-self-indicating weighing machines; or
- (c) externally-controlled weights used through a system of levers and incorporated in two- or three-knife edge balances.

PART II

MATERIALS AND PRINCIPLES OF CONSTRUCTION AND MARKING OF WEIGHTS

Materials

4. Except to the extent that it may—

- (a) contain lead in an adjusting hole, or
 - (b) be painted, coated or otherwise treated to inhibit corrosion,
- a weight, other than a weight for use in connection with the manufacture of explosives, shall—

- (i) if of the flat or wire type, be made of gold or platinum or aluminium or of an alloy of any of those metals or of a metal of a density of not less than 7000 nor more than 9500 kg/m³; or

- (ii) if of any other type, be made of a metal of such a density as mentioned in paragraph (i) and of hardness at least equal to cast brass.

Shape

5.—(1) Except as provided by paragraph (2), a weight shall only be of a type or form mentioned in the following Table in relation to a weight of its purported mass:—

TABLE

<i>Type or form</i>	<i>Weights which may be of that type or form</i>
1. Metric weights (other than carat (metric) weights): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The irregular octahedronal form described in Schedule 2 (ii) The rectangular form described in Schedule 2 (iii) The cylindrical form described in Schedule 2 (iv) The hexagonal form described in Schedule 2 (v) The disc form described in Schedule 2 (vi) Flat type (vii) Wire type 	Weights of 25 kg. Weights of 5 kg, 10 kg or 20 kg. Weights of not more than 10 kg nor less than 20 g and of 10, 5, 2 and 1 g. Weights of not more than 2 kg nor less than 100 g. Weights of not more than 50 g nor less than 1 g. Weights of not more than 1 g nor less than 10 mg. Weights of 50 mg or less.
2. Carat (metric) weights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Cylindrical with a knob (ii) Flat type (iii) Wire type 	Weights of 5 C.M. or more. Weights of not more than 20 C.M. nor less than 0·05 C.M. Weights of 0·25 C.M. or less.
3. Imperial weights (other than weights in paragraphs 4 and 5): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Bell, bar, flat-circular or ring type (ii) Octagonal type 	Any weight other than a weight of 50, 20, 10 or 5lb. Weights of 50, 20, 10 or 5lb.
4. Weights expressed as multiples or fractions of 1/7000 lb: Flat or wire type	All such weights.

<i>Type or form</i>	<i>Weights which may be of that type or form</i>
5. Ounce troy weights: (i) Cylindrical with a carrying handle or knob (ii) Flat or wire type	Weights of 1 oz. tr or more. Weights of 0.5 oz tr or less.

(2) Nothing in paragraph (1) or Schedule 2 shall preclude any weight from being regarded as fit for use for trade by reason of the fact that one or more edges are chamfered or rounded.

Adjusting holes

6.—(1) A metric weight of less than 20 g and an imperial weight of less than 1 oz shall not have an adjusting hole.

(2) Any other weight shall not have more than one adjusting hole.

(3) An adjusting hole shall be in the form of a cavity in a plane surface of the weight, and shall be—

- (a) empty;
- (b) undercut and plugged with lead; or
- (c) closed by a plug or disc made of brass or steel.

(4) Where an adjusting hole is closed with a plug or disc, the plug or disc shall, except in the case of a carat (metric) weight or an ounce troy weight, be secured by a lead pellet driven into an undercut recess or, if the cavity is threaded, into the thread so that it is not readily removable.

(5) The plug, disc or lead shall not protrude from the surface of the weight.

Marking

7.—(1) All weights other than wire weights shall be marked with a durable and legible indication of their purported mass.

(2) The marking shall comprise figures indicating the number of units and words or an appropriate symbol or abbreviation mentioned in Schedule 1 to indicate the relevant unit.

(3) A weight shall not bear any marking other than:—

- (a) the markings referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2);
- (b) the name or mark of the maker;
- (c) the name of the owner or an indication of his name;
- (d) the stamp applied by an inspector; or
- (e) in the case of a weight first passed as fit for use for trade and stamped before 27th April 1978, the word “dram” or the abbreviation “dr”.

(4) Where a weight bears the name or mark of its maker or the name of its owner or an indication of the owner’s name, the height of the mark or lettering shall not exceed one-half of the height of the figures employed to indicate its purported mass.

PART III

TESTING

Cleanliness of weights

8. Weights shall not be submitted for testing or tested unless they are in a clean condition.

Testing of weights

9.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), an inspector shall test weights with a view to passing as fit for use for trade and, where appropriate, stamping against appropriate local or working standard weights by the method of substitution on such proper and sufficient testing equipment as is provided for the use of an inspector in accordance with Article 4 of the Order.

(2) The repeatability and discrimination threshold of the testing equipment used for the purposes of the test referred to in paragraph (1) shall not exceed one-fifth of the relevant amount specified in column 2 of the relevant Table in Schedule 4 as the prescribed limit of error on passing as fit for use for trade for the weight which is being tested.

(3) Subject to paragraph (4), an inspector shall test weights with a view to the obliteration of the stamp, where appropriate, against appropriate local or working standard weights by the method of substitution or, if he considers it sufficient, by comparison, on testing equipment referred to in paragraph (1).

(4) The repeatability and discrimination threshold of the testing equipment used for the purposes of the test referred to in paragraph (3) shall not exceed one-half of the relevant amount specified in column 3 of the relevant Table in Schedule 4 as the prescribed limit of error in relation to the obliteration of the stamp for the weight which is being tested.

PART IV

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS

Prescribed limits of error

10. The prescribed limits of error relating to weights shall be those set out in the relevant Table in Schedule 4.

Passing as fit for use for trade

11. A weight shall not be passed as fit for use for trade unless—

- (a) it complies with all the appropriate requirements of these Regulations; and
- (b) on testing it falls within the prescribed limits of error in relation to passing as fit for use for trade in column 2 of the relevant Table in Schedule 4.

Stamping

12. Weights shall be stamped—

- (a) on the lead in the adjusting hole,
- (b) on the bottom of the adjusting hole if it contains no lead,

- (c) on the bottom of the weight if there is no adjusting hole, or
- (d) on the lead pellet securing any plug or disc.

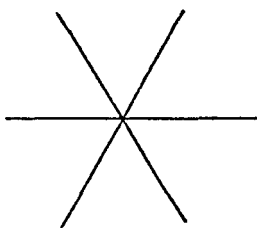
Inspectors' powers and duties regarding obliteration of stamps

13.—(1) Where a weight bearing the stamp is found by an inspector to be heavier or lighter than its purported mass by more than the prescribed limit of error set out in column 3 of the relevant Table in Schedule 4 he shall either obliterate the stamp or serve upon the person in possession of the weight a notice requiring him to have it adjusted within 28 days.

(2) Where notice as mentioned in paragraph (1) is served and the weight is consequently retested after the expiration of the stated period and found to be outside the said prescribed limit of error, the inspector shall obliterate the stamp on it.

(3) Where a weight bearing the stamp is found by an inspector not to comply with any other appropriate requirement of Part II, he shall obliterate the stamp on it.

(4) The stamp shall be obliterated by an inspector, in accordance with the requirements of this Regulation, by impressing on it a design in the form of a six-pointed star as shown in the following illustration:



Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of Economic Development on 24th July 1987.

(L.S.)

Joan Dixon

Assistant Secretary

SCHEDULE 1

Regulations 2(2) and 7(2)

SYMBOLS FOR, AND ABBREVIATIONS OF, UNITS OF WEIGHT AND MEASUREMENT

Metric

kilogram	kg
gram	g
milligram	mg
carat (metric)	C.M. or CM
cubic metre	m ³
millimetre	mm

Imperial

pound	lb
ounce	oz
ounce troy	oz tr or oz troy
weights expressed as multiples or fractions of 1/7000 pound	gr

SCHEDULE 2

Regulation 5

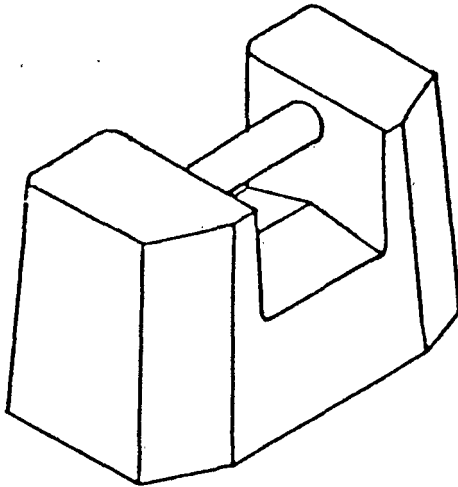
FORM OF METRIC WEIGHTS

Irregular octahedronal

1. The form of irregular octahedronal weight referred to in paragraph 1(i) of the Table in Regulation 5(1) shall be as shown in the diagram, being the rectangular form shown in paragraph 2 cut away vertically on two corners of the same side. The cutaway sections shall be identical, and so proportioned that—

- (i) the width of each end of the weight shall not be more than 80 per cent. of the full cross-sectional width; and
- (ii) the length of the side thus formed shall not be more than 60 per cent. of the full cross-sectional length.

The length and the width of the weight may vary to the extent permitted for the rectangular weight in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph 2.



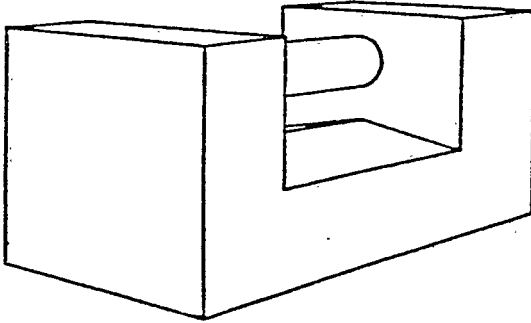
(Viewed obliquely and from above the level of the top surface)

Rectangular

2. The form of rectangular weight referred to in paragraph 1(ii) of the said Table shall be shown in diagrams (i), (ii) and (iii), except that—

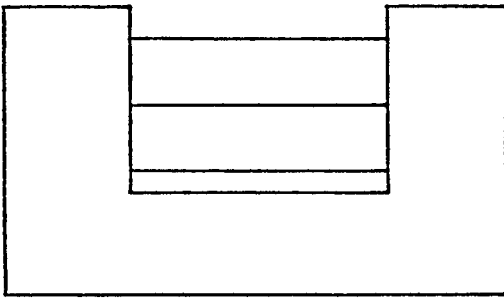
- (a) the length of the weight at the top and the length at the bottom may differ by an amount which does not exceed 5 per cent. of the smaller length; and
- (b) the width of the upper surface and the width of the lower surface may differ by an amount which does not exceed 10 per cent. of the smaller width.

Diagram (i)



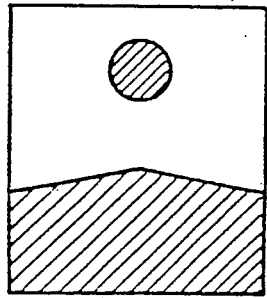
(Viewed obliquely and from above the level of the top surface)

Diagram (ii)



(Viewed from the side)

Diagram (iii)



(Viewed from the end)

Cylindrical

3. The form of cylindrical weight referred to in paragraph 1(iii) of the said Table shall be such that—

- (a) any horizontal section is circular;
- (b) the body of the weight is of constant diameter;
- (c) a flat-topped knob is provided in such a manner that a neck is produced between the knob and the body;
- (d) the neck is cylindrical, tapered or waisted and its height is such that it does not readily provide a lodging place for extraneous matter; and
- (e) the maximum diameter of the knob is not greater than the diameter of the body, nor less than one-half of it.

Hexagonal

4. The form of hexagonal weight referred to in paragraph 1(iv) of the said Table shall be such that—

- (a) any horizontal section is a regular hexagon;
- (b) all the sides are flat;

- (c) the shortest distance across the base is not less than 80 per cent. nor more than 120 per cent. of the shortest distance across the top; and
- (d) the height is not less than 45 per cent. nor more than 55 per cent. of the shortest distance across the top or, if the base is smaller in area than the top, across the base.

Disc

5. The form of disc weight referred to in paragraph 1(v) of the said Table shall be a circular disc the thickness of which is not less than one-sixth nor more than one-third of the diameter.

SCHEDULE 3

Regulation 2(1)

APPROPRIATE LOCAL OR WORKING STANDARD WEIGHTS

<i>Weight</i>	<i>Standard of weight to be used</i>
1. METRIC EXCEPT CARAT (METRIC) WEIGHTS Not less than 50 mg Not more than 20 mg	Local standards or working standards Local standards or working standards of an equivalent accuracy
2. AVOIRDUPOIS EXCEPT WEIGHTS EXPRESSED AS MULTIPLES OR FRACTIONS OF 1/7000 lb.	Local standards or working standards
3. OUNCE TROY	Local standards or working standards of an equivalent accuracy
4. CARAT (METRIC)	" "
5. WEIGHTS EXPRESSED AS MULTIPLES OR FRACTIONS OF 1/7000 lb.	" "

SCHEDULE 4

Regulation 10

PRESCRIBED LIMITS OF ERROR

TABLE 1

Metric except carat (metric) weights of not less than 50 mg.

(1) Purported mass of the weight	(2) Prescribed limits of error on passing as fit for use for trade (+ only)	(3) Prescribed limits of error in relation to the obliteration of the stamp (\pm)
25 kg	4000 mg	4000 mg
20 kg	3200 mg	3200 mg
10 kg	1600 mg	1600 mg
5 kg	800 mg	800 mg
2 kg	400 mg	400 mg
1 kg	200 mg	200 mg
500 g	100 mg	100 mg
200 g	50 mg	50 mg
100 g	30 mg	30 mg
50 g	30 mg	30 mg
20 g	20 mg	20 mg
15 g	20 mg	20 mg
10 g	20 mg	20 mg
5 g	10 mg	10 mg
4 g	10 mg	10 mg
3 g	5 mg	5 mg
2 g	5 mg	5 mg
1 g	5 mg	5 mg
500 mg	2.5 mg	2.5 mg
400 mg	2.5 mg	2.5 mg
300 mg	2 mg	2 mg
200 mg	2 mg	2 mg
150 mg	2 mg	2 mg
100 mg	1.5 mg	1.5 mg
50 mg	1.2 mg	1.2 mg

TABLE 2

Metric except carat (metric) weights of not more than 20 mg.

(1) Purported mass of the weight	(2) Prescribed limits of error on passing as fit for use for trade (\pm)	(3) Prescribed limits of error in relation to the obliteration of the stamp (\pm)
20 mg	0.3 mg	0.6 mg
10 mg	0.25 mg	0.5 mg
5 mg	0.2 mg	0.4 mg
2 mg	0.2 mg	0.4 mg
1 mg	0.2 mg	0.4 mg

TABLE 3

Carat (metric) weights.

(1) Purported mass of the weight	(2) Prescribed limits of error on passing as fit for use for trade (\pm)	(3) Prescribed limits of error in relation to the obliteration of the stamp (\pm)
500 C.M.	5.0 mg	10.0 mg
200 C.M.	3.0 mg	6.0 mg
100 C.M.	2.5 mg	5.0 mg
50 C.M.	2.0 mg	4.0 mg
20 C.M.	1.5 mg	3.0 mg
10 C.M.	1.2 mg	2.4 mg
5 C.M.	1.0 mg	2.0 mg
2 C.M.	0.7 mg	1.4 mg
1 C.M.	0.6 mg	1.2 mg
0.5 C.M.	0.5 mg	1.0 mg
0.25 C.M.	0.4 mg	0.8 mg
0.2 C.M.	0.4 mg	0.8 mg
0.1 C.M.	0.3 mg	0.6 mg
0.05 C.M.	0.2 mg	0.4 mg
0.02 C.M.	0.2 mg	0.4 mg
0.01 C.M.	0.2 mg	0.4 mg

TABLE 4

Avoirdupois weights

(1) Purported mass of the weight	(2) Prescribed limits of error on passing as fit for use for trade (+ only)	(3) Prescribed limits of error in relation to the obliteration of the stamp (\pm)
56 lb	4000 mg	4000 mg
50 lb	3600 mg	3600 mg
28 lb	2000 mg	2000 mg
20 lb	1500 mg	1500 mg
14 lb	1000 mg	1000 mg
10 lb	750 mg	750 mg
7 lb	560 mg	560 mg
5 lb	450 mg	450 mg
4 lb	360 mg	360 mg
2 lb	180 mg	180 mg
1 lb	100 mg	100 mg
8 oz	60 mg	60 mg
4 oz	35 mg	35 mg
2 oz	30 mg	30 mg
1 oz	25 mg	25 mg
1/2 oz	20 mg	20 mg
1/4 oz	15 mg	15 mg
1/8 oz	10 mg	10 mg
1/16 oz	5 mg	5 mg
1/32 oz	5 mg	5 mg

TABLE 5

Weights expressed as multiples or fractions of 1/7000lb.

(1) Purported mass of the weight	(2) Prescribed limits of error on passing as fit for use for trade (±)	(3) Prescribed limits of error in relation to the obliteration of the stamp (±)
100	1.65 mg	3.30 mg
50	1.32 mg	2.64 mg
30	1.20 mg	2.40 mg
20	1.06 mg	2.12 mg
10	0.86 mg	1.72 mg
5	0.68 mg	1.36 mg
3	0.60 mg	1.20 mg
2	0.53 mg	1.06 mg
1	0.43 mg	0.86 mg
0.5	0.34 mg	0.68 mg
0.3	0.30 mg	0.60 mg
0.2	0.27 mg	0.54 mg
0.1	0.21 mg	0.42 mg
0.05	0.20 mg	0.40 mg
0.03	0.20 mg	0.40 mg
0.02	0.20 mg	0.40 mg
0.01	0.20 mg	0.40 mg

TABLE 6

Ounce troy weights.

(1) Purported mass of the weight	(2) Prescribed limits of error on passing as fit for use for trade (±)	(3) Prescribed limits of error in relation to the obliteration of the stamp (±)
500 oz tr	780 mg	1560 mg
400 oz tr	620 mg	1240 mg
300 oz tr	465 mg	930 mg
200 oz tr	310 mg	620 mg
100 oz tr	155 mg	310 mg
50 oz tr	80 mg	160 mg
40 oz tr	60 mg	120 mg
30 oz tr	50 mg	100 mg
20 oz tr	30 mg	60 mg
10 oz tr	15 mg	30 mg
5 oz tr	8 mg	16 mg
4 oz tr	6 mg	12 mg
3 oz tr	5 mg	10 mg
2 oz tr	3.5 mg	7 mg
1 oz tr	2.7 mg	5.4 mg
0.5 oz tr	2.3 mg	4.6 mg
0.4 oz tr	2.1 mg	4.2 mg
0.3 oz tr	1.9 mg	3.8 mg
0.2 oz tr	1.6 mg	3.2 mg
0.1 oz tr	1.3 mg	2.6 mg
0.05 oz tr	1.1 mg	2.2 mg
0.04 oz tr	1.0 mg	2.0 mg
0.03 oz tr	1.0 mg	2.0 mg
0.025 oz tr	0.9 mg	1.8 mg
0.02 oz tr	0.8 mg	1.6 mg
0.01 oz tr	0.7 mg	1.4 mg
0.005 oz tr	0.6 mg	1.2 mg
0.004 oz tr	0.5 mg	1.0 mg
0.003 oz tr	0.5 mg	1.0 mg
0.002 oz tr	0.4 mg	0.8 mg
0.001 oz tr	0.3 mg	0.6 mg

SCHEDULE 5

Regulation 1

REGULATIONS REVOKED

Column 1 <i>Regulations revoked</i>	Column 2 <i>References</i>
Weights and Measures (Weights) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1971	S.R. & O. (N.I.) 1971 No. 342
Weights and Measures (Weights) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1977	S.R. 1977 No. 136

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations.)

These Regulations replace the Weights and Measures (Weights) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1971 (the "1971 Regulations"), as amended. They apply to all weights for use for trade other than those used for weighing coins or currency notes or those used in connection with certain weighing equipment. They make provision as to the materials and principles of construction and marking of weights, testing, prescribed limits of error, stamping and obliteration of stamps. The Regulations prescribe weights for the purposes of Article 9(1) of the Weights and Measures (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 so that it is unlawful to use them for trade purposes unless they have been tested, passed as fit for such use and stamped by an inspector of weights and measures.

The Regulations revoke the 1971 Regulations (with the exception of Regulation 12) and the Weights and Measures (Weights) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1977 with effect from 1st September 1987. Regulation 12 of the 1971 Regulations is revoked with effect from 1st September 1988 and Part II of, and Schedule 3 to, those Regulations continue to have effect until 1st September 1988 in so far as they are necessary for the purposes of the said Regulation 12 (Regulation 1(2), (3) and (4) and Schedule 5).

The Regulations repeat the provisions of the 1971 Regulations, as amended, subject to the following changes of substance:—

- (a) metric weights of 50 g may now be of the disc form and troy weights of 1 oz tr or more may have a carrying handle as an alternative to a knob (Regulation 5(1));
- (b) the adjusting hole may be empty and in the case of a carat (metric) or troy weight may be closed with a plug or disc flush with the surface of the weight instead of being secured by a lead pellet driven into an undercut recess or thread (Regulation 6(3) and (4));
- (c) weights are to be tested with a view to passing as fit for use for trade by the method of substitution (instead of substitution or comparison), and testing may be carried out on other testing equipment besides balances or beamscales. Moreover weights of the following classes may be tested with working standard weights only if those standards are of an accuracy equivalent to local standard weights:
 - (i) metric weights of not more than 20 mg nor less than 1 mg;
 - (ii) carat (metric) weights;
 - (iii) weights expressed as multiples or fractions of 1/7000 lb; and
 - (iv) ounce troy weights(Regulation 9 and Schedule 3);
- (d) the permissible limits of error are amended (Regulation 10).

The Regulations come into operation on 1st September 1987 with the exception of Regulations 1(4) and 13 which come into operation on 1st

September 1988. Regulation 13 relates to the obliteration of the stamp and the delayed implementation of this Regulation will give those persons affected by lower limits of error time to get their weights adjusted or replaced.

It is an offence under Article 9(2) of the Weights and Measures (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 for a person to use for trade or have in his possession for such use any weight prescribed by Regulation 3 which has not been passed as fit for such use and which, except as is otherwise expressly provided by or under that Order, does not bear a stamp indicating that it has been so passed which remains undefaced otherwise than by reason of fair wear and tear. The penalty on summary conviction for this offence is a fine not exceeding £400 and the weight in respect of which the offence is committed is liable to forfeiture.