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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**1986 No. 1078**

**The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986**

**PART II**

**REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE CONSTRUCTION,  
EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES**

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**PROTECTIVE SYSTEMS**

**Seat belts**

- 47.**—(1) This regulation applies to every vehicle to which regulation 46 applies.
- (2) Save as provided in paragraph (4) a vehicle to which—
- (a) this regulation applies which was first used before 1st April 1981 shall be provided with—
    - (i) a body-restraining seat belt, designed for use by an adult, for the driver's seat; and
    - (ii) a body-restraining seat belt for the specified passenger's seat (if any);
  - (b) this regulation applies which is first used on or after 1st April 1981 shall be provided with three-point seat belts for the driver's seat and for the specified passenger's seat (if any);
  - (c) regulation 46(4)(a)(ii) applies which is first used on or after 1st April 1987 shall be fitted with seat belts additional to those required by sub-paragraph (b) as follows—
    - (i) for any forward-facing front seat alongside the driver's seat, not being a specified passenger's seat, a seat belt which is a three-point belt, or a lap belt installed in accordance with paragraph 3.1.2.1 of Annex 1 to Community Directive 77/541 or a disabled person's belt;
    - (ii) in the case of a passenger or dual-purpose vehicle having not more than two forward-facing seats behind the driver's seat with either—
      - (A) an inertia reel belt for at least one of those seats, or
      - (B) a three-point belt, a lap belt, a disabled person's belt or a child restraint for each of those seats;
    - (iii) in the case of a passenger or dual-purpose vehicle having more than two forward-facing seats behind the driver's seat, with either—
      - (A) an inertia reel belt for one of those seats being an outboard seat and a three-point belt, a lap belt, a disabled person's belt or a child restraint for at least one other of those seats;
      - (B) a three-point belt for one of those seats and either a child restraint or a disabled person's belt for at least one other of those seats; or
      - (C) a three-point belt, a lap belt, a disabled person's belt or a child restraint for each of those seats.

(3) Every seat belt for an adult, other than a disabled person's belt, provided for a vehicle in accordance with paragraph (2)(b) or (c) shall, except as provided in paragraph (6), comply with the installation requirements specified in paragraph 3.2.2 to 3.3.4 of Annex I to Community Directive 77/541 whether or not that Directive applies to the vehicle.

(4) The requirements specified in paragraph (2) do not apply—

- (a) to a vehicle while it is being used under a trade licence within the meaning of section 16 of the 1971 Act;
- (b) to a vehicle, not being a vehicle to which the Type Approval (Great Britain) Regulations apply, while it is being driven from premises of the manufacturer by whom it was made, or of a distributor of vehicles or dealer in vehicles—
  - (i) to premises of a distributor of or dealer in vehicles or of the purchaser of the vehicle, or
  - (ii) to premises of a person obtaining possession of the vehicle under a hiring agreement or hire-purchase agreement;
- (c) in relation to any seat for which there is provided—
  - (i) a seat belt which bears a mark including the specification number of the British Standard for Passive Belt Systems, namely BS AU 183:1983 and including the registered certification trade mark of the British Standards Institution; or
  - (ii) a seat belt designed for use by an adult which is a harness belt comprising a lap belt and shoulder straps which bears a British Standard mark or a mark including the specification number for the British Standard for Seat Belt Assemblies for Motor Vehicles, namely BS 3254:1960 and including the registered certification trade mark of the British Standards Institution, or the marking designated in item 16 in Schedule 2 to the Approval Marks Regulations;
- (d) in relation to the driver's seat or the specified passenger's seat (if any) of a vehicle which has been specially designed and constructed, or specially adapted, for the use of a person suffering from some physical defect or disability, in a case where a disabled person's belt for an adult person is provided for use for that seat.

(5) Every seat belt provided in pursuance of paragraph (2) shall be properly secured to the anchorage points provided for it in accordance with regulation 46; or, in the case of a child restraint, to anchorages specially provided for it or, in the case of a disabled person's belt, secured to the vehicle or to the seat which is being occupied by the person wearing the belt.

(6) Paragraph (3), in so far as it relates to the second paragraph of paragraph 3.3.2 of the Annex there mentioned (which concerns the locking or releasing of a seat belt by a single movement) does not apply in respect of a seat belt fitted for—

- (a) a seat which is treated as a specified passenger's seat by virtue of the provisions of sub-paragraph (ii) in the definition of “specified passenger's seat” in paragraph (8); or
- (b) any forward-facing seat for a passenger alongside the driver's seat of a goods vehicle which has an unladen weight of more than 915 kg and has more than one such seat, any such seats for passengers being joined together in a single structure.

(7) Every seat belt, other than a disabled person's belt or a seat belt of a kind mentioned in paragraph 4(c)(i) or (ii) above, provided for any person in a vehicle to which this regulation applies shall be legibly and permanently marked—

- (a) if the vehicle was first used before 1st April 1981 or if the belt is a child restraint, with a British Standard mark or a designated approval mark; or
- (b) in any other case, with a designated approval mark.

Provided this paragraph shall not operate so as to invalidate the exception permitted in paragraph (6).

(8) In this regulation—

“body-restraining seat belt” means a seat belt designed to provide restraint for both the upper and lower parts of the trunk of the wearer in the event of an accident to the vehicle;

“British Standard mark” means a mark consisting of—

- (i) the specification number of one of the following British Standards for Seat Belt Assemblies for Motor Vehicles, namely—
  - (a) if it is a seat belt for an adult, BS 3254; 1960 and BS AU 160a or 160b; or
  - (b) if it is a child restraint, BS 3254:1960, BS AU 157 or 157a, BS AU 185, BS AU 186 or 186a, BS AU 202; and, in either case,
- (ii) the registered certification trade mark of the British Standards Institution;

“child restraint” means a seat belt for the use of a young person which is designed either to be fitted directly to a suitable anchorage or to be used in conjunction with a seat belt for an adult and held in place by the restraining action of that belt: Provided that for the purposes of paragraph (2) (c)(ii)(B) and (2)(c)(iii) it means only such seat belts fitted directly to a suitable anchorage and excludes belts marked with the specification numbers BS AU 185 and BS AU 186 or 186a.

“designated approval mark” means

- (a) if it is a seat belt other than a child restraint, the marking designated as an approval mark by regulation 4 of the Approval Marks Regulations and shown at item 16 of Schedule 2 to those Regulations or the marking designated as an approval mark by regulation 5 of those Regulations and shown at item 23 and 23A in Schedule 4 to those Regulations, and
- (b) if it is a child restraint, either of the markings designated as approval marks by regulation 4 of those Regulations and shown at item 44 and 44A in Schedule 2 to those Regulations.

“disabled person's belt” means a seat belt which has been specially designed or adapted for use by an adult or young person suffering from some physical defect or disability and which is intended for use solely by such a person;

“forward-facing seat” means a seat which is attached to a vehicle so that it faces towards the front of the vehicle in such a manner that a line passing through the centre of both the front and the back of the seat is at an angle of 30° or less to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle;

“inertia reel belt” means a three-point belt of either of the types required for a front outboard seating position by paragraph 3.1.1. of Annex 1 to Community Directive 77/541;

“lap belt” means a seat belt which passes across the front of the wearer's pelvic region;

“seat” includes any part designed for the accommodation of one adult of a continuous seat designed for the accommodation of more than one adult;

“seat belt” means a belt intended to be worn by a person in a vehicle and designed to prevent or lessen injury to its wearer in the event of an accident to the vehicle and includes, in the case of a child restraint, any special chair to which the belt is attached;

“specified passenger's seat” means—

- (i) in the case of a vehicle which has one forward-facing front seat alongside the driver's seat, that seat, and in the case of a vehicle which has more than one such seat, the one furthest from the driver's seat; or
- (ii) if the vehicle normally has no seat which is the specified passenger's seat under subparagraph (i) of this definition the forward-facing front seat for a passenger which is foremost in the vehicle and furthest from the driver's seat, unless there is a fixed partition separating that seat from the space in front of it alongside the driver's seat;

and

“three-point belt” means a seat belt which—

- (i) restrains the upper and lower parts of the torso;
- (ii) includes a lap belt;
- (iii) is anchored at not less than three points; and
- (iv) is designed for use by an adult.