
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1994 No. 1768

The Plugs and Sockets etc. (Safety) Regulations 1994

Citation, commencement and revocation

- 1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Plugs and Sockets etc. (Safety) Regulations 1994.
- (2) These Regulations shall, except as provided by paragraphs (3) and (4) below, come into force on 3rd August 1994.
- (3) Part II of these Regulations shall come into force—
- (a) on 1st February 1995 in relation to the supply, offer for supply, agreement to supply, exposure for supply or possession for supply of any appliance to which that Part applies by a manufacturer in or importer into the United Kingdom, or in the case of appliances manufactured in or imported into the United Kingdom on behalf of another person, by that other person; and
 - (b) on 1st February 1996 in all other cases.
- (4) Regulation 2(1) shall come into force on 1st February 1995.

Revocation

- 2.—(1) The Electrical Appliances (Colour Code) Regulations 1969(1), the Electrical Appliances (Colour Code) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1970(2), the Electrical Appliances (Colour Code) (Amendment) Regulations 1970(3), the Electrical Appliances (Colour Code) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1970(4), the Electrical Appliances (Colour Code) (Amendment) Regulations 1977(5) and the Electrical Appliances (Colour Code) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1977(6) are hereby revoked.
- (2) The Plugs and Sockets etc. (Safety) Regulations 1987(7) are hereby revoked.

Interpretation

- 3.—(1) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires—
- “adaptor” means a device which may be engaged with a socket, being a device which is designed—
- (a) to enable a plug having pins, or other forms of contact, of different dimensions or configuration to those of the socket to be engaged with the socket;
 - (b) to enable more than one plug to be engaged with the socket; or
 - (c) to be used for both of the purposes mentioned in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) above;
- “appliance” means an appliance to which Part II of these Regulations applies by virtue of regulation 11(1) below;

(1) S.I.1969/310.
(2) S.R. 1970 No. 31.
(3) S.I. 1970/811.
(4) S.R. 1970 No. 180.
(5) S.I. 1977/931.
(6) S.R. 1977 No. 301.
(7) S.I. 1987/603.

“appliance coupler” means a device designed to connect a flexible cable or cord to electrical equipment and consisting of—

- (a) a connector which is integral with, or intended to be attached to, the flexible cable or cord; and
- (b) an inlet which is incorporated in or fixed to the electrical equipment, or intended to be fixed to it;

“BS 546” means the British Standard Specification for two-pole and earthing-pin plugs, socket-outlets and socket-outlet adaptors BS 546: 1950 published by the British Standards Institution on 16th March 1950, including Supplement No. 1 (1960) published on 30th December 1960 and Supplement No. 2 (1987) published on 23rd December 1987, incorporating Amendment No. 1 issued in December 1953 and as amended by Amendment No. 2 published on 28th November 1961, Amendment Slips 3 and 4 published on 16th May 1969 and 29th July 1977 respectively, and Amendments No. 5, 6 and 7 published on 31st August 1982, 23rd December 1987 and 31st January 1989 respectively;

“BS 646” means the British Standard Specification for cartridge fuse-links (rated up to 5 amperes) for AC and DC service BS 646: 1958 published by the British Standards Institution on 31st January 1958, as amended by Amendment No. 1 published on 31st January 1991;

“BS 1362” means the British Standard Specification for general purpose fuse links for domestic and similar purposes (primarily for use in plugs) BS 1362: 1973 published on 28th February 1973, as amended by Amendments No. 1 and 2 published on 29th June 1984 and 30th April 1991 respectively⁽⁸⁾ ;

“BS 1363” means the British Standard Specification for 13 amp fused plugs and switched and unswitched socket-outlets BS 1363: 1984 published by the British Standards Institution on 31st August 1984, as amended by Amendments No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 published on 30th April 1985, 31st December 1985, 31st July 1987, 23rd December 1987, 30th June 1989 and 28th February 1990 respectively⁽⁹⁾ ;

“BS 3535: Part 1” means the British Standard Specification of general requirements for isolating transformers and safety isolating transformers BS 3535: Part 1: 1990 published by the British Standards Institution on 31st August 1990⁽¹⁰⁾ ;

“BS 4573” means the British Standard Specification for two-pin reversible plugs and shaver socket-outlets BS 4573: 1970 published by the British Standards Institution on 19th March 1970, as amended by Amendments No. 1 and 2 published on 31st October 1983 and 29th April 1988 respectively⁽¹¹⁾ ;

“BS 5733” means the British Standard Specification of general requirements for electrical accessories BS 5733: 1979 published by the British Standards Institution on 30th April 1979, as amended by Amendments No. 1, 2 and 3 published on 31st July 1981, 29th April 1983 and 30th June 1986 respectively⁽¹²⁾ ;

“BS EN 50075” means the British Standard Specification for flat non-wirable two-pole plugs, 2.5 amp/250 volt, with cord, for the connection of class II equipment for household and similar purposes BS EN 50075: 1991 published by the British Standards Institution on 20th December 1991⁽¹³⁾ ;

“cable connector” means a device designed to join flexible cables or cords in such a way that the cables or cords can be joined and separated without the use of a tool;

⁽⁸⁾ ISBN 0 580 07438 2.

⁽⁹⁾ ISBN 0 580 13556 X.

⁽¹⁰⁾ ISBN 0 580 17985 0.

⁽¹¹⁾ ISBN 0 580 05807 7.

⁽¹²⁾ ISBN 0 580 10739 6.

⁽¹³⁾ ISBN 0 580 19678 X.

“cartridge” means a container which totally encloses a fuse element, consists of insulating material, is tubular in form and the ends of which are enclosed by metallic caps;

“cartridge fuse link” means a cartridge containing a fuse element;

“the Commission” means the Commission of the European Communities;

“conversion plug” means a device which may be engaged with a socket conforming to BS 1363 and which is designed to enable a non-UK plug to be engaged with such a socket;

“the Low Voltage Directive” means Council Directive [73/23/EEC](#) on the harmonisation of the laws of the member States of the European Economic Community relating to electrical equipment designed for use within certain voltage limits as amended by Council Directive [93/68/EEC\(14\)\(15\)](#) ;

“electrical device” means a device to which Part I of these Regulations applies by virtue of regulation 4(1) below;

“fuse element” means that part of a fuse designed to melt when an excessive current flows into an electrical circuit;

“fuse link” means that part of a fuse including the fuse element which requires replacement by a new fuse link after the fuse element has melted and before the fuse can be put back into service;

“IEC 884-1” means the International Electrotechnical Commission standard for plugs and socket-outlets for household and similar purposes IEC 884-1 (1987) published by the International Electrotechnical Commission in 1987 as amended by Amendments No. 1 and 2 published in June 1988 and November 1991 respectively;

“luminaire” means apparatus which distributes, filters or transforms the light transmitted from one or more lamps and which includes all the parts necessary for supporting, fixing and protecting the lamps, together with the means for connecting them to the supply, but not the lamps themselves;

“member State” means a member State of the European Economic Community or another State within the European Economic Area;

“non-UK plug” means any plug which is not suitable without adaptation or modification for connection to a mains socket in the United Kingdom;

“notified body” means any person notified to the Commission and member States in accordance with the procedure in Article 11 of the Low Voltage Directive in its unamended form as being competent to establish marks and certificates in accordance with the provisions of Article 10 of that Directive in its unamended form and any person appointed pursuant to regulation 7 below;

“plug” means a device other than a cable connector or an appliance coupler, which may be engaged with a socket and which is designed for the purposes of connecting to a socket any electrical equipment to which the device is attached by means of a flexible cable or cord;

“plug transformer” means an electrical transformer which carries three pins substantially rectangular in form and which is designed for engagement with a socket made to the dimensions specified in BS 1363;

“portable multiple socket outlet” means electrical equipment which comprises two or more sockets designed and made to dimensions other than those specified in BS 1363, which is designed to be connected to a socket conforming to BS 1363 by means of a flexible cable or cord and a plug, and which may be used without being mounted onto a fixed surface or structure;

(14) OJ No. L77, 26.3.73, p.29.

(15) OJ No. L220, 30.8.93, p.1.

“red plug” means a plug which carries three pins substantially rectangular in form, is designed to be engaged with a socket made to the dimensions specified in BS 1363, and which incorporates an auxiliary sensing circuit which will automatically disconnect the main circuit at a predetermined current;

“round-pin plug” means a plug carrying pins substantially cylindrical in form;

“socket” means a device other than a cable connector, with which a plug may be engaged for the purpose of connecting to an electrical circuit, whether or not by means of a switch, electrical equipment to which a plug is attached;

“standard plug” means a plug which carries three pins substantially rectangular in form and is designed for engagement with a socket made to the dimensions specified in BS 1363.

(2) In these Regulations—

- (a) where any standard is mentioned, that reference is a reference to that standard as it has effect on the date on which these Regulations are made (including any amendment or revision made or taking effect on or before that date), provided that where any such standard has been amended or revised after that date, whether or not such amendment or revision involves the publication of separate parts on different dates, and the amendment or revision has been approved by the Secretary of State, that reference is to be construed at any time after the amendment or revision as a reference to that standard as so amended or revised or, as appropriate, to the relevant part of that standard as so amended or revised;
- (b) where any standard mentioned in these Regulations specifies relevant requirements by reference to another standard, that reference is to be construed as a reference to that other standard as it has effect on the date on which these Regulations are made (including any amendment or revision to that other standard made or taking effect on or before that date), provided that where any such other standard has been amended or revised after that date and the amendment or revision has been approved by the Secretary of State, that reference is to be construed at any time after the amendment or revision as a reference to that other standard as so amended or revised.

(3) Where there is a requirement in any provision of these Regulations that an electrical device shall conform to a British Standard, including where conformity is required for approval by a notified body, such requirement shall be satisfied if the electrical device conforms to any standard or specification recognised for use in a member State, provided that conformity to such a standard or specification provides a level of safety equivalent to that which would be provided by conformity to the relevant British Standard, and any reference to such a requirement shall be construed accordingly.

PART I

Electrical devices to which Part I applies

4.—(1) Subject to the following provisions of this regulation, this Part applies to the following devices namely any plug, socket or adaptor ordinarily intended for domestic use at a voltage of not less than 200 volts, to any fuse link which is suitable for use in any such plug being a standard plug and to any cartridge fuse link which is suitable for use in any other plugs and adaptors but does not apply to any electrical device specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations.

(2) This Part does not apply to any plug or socket inside or forming an integral part of electrical equipment which is so designed that the plug is not capable of being engaged with or disengaged from the socket without something first being done to the equipment (whether or not including the said plug or socket) which requires the use of a tool.

(3) In the case of a plug or socket inside or forming an integral part of electrical equipment and required to conform to a British Standard referred to in Schedule 2 to these Regulations, this Part only applies to the extent that it is practicable to do so.

Prohibitions on supply etc. of electrical devices

5. No person shall supply, offer for supply, agree to supply, expose for supply or possess for supply an electrical device unless the requirements of regulation 6 below are satisfied in relation to it.

Requirements for electrical devices

6.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2) below, the requirements of this regulation are that the electrical device complies with the requirements of regulations 8 or 10 below as appropriate.

(2) A standard plug shall contain or be accompanied by a fuse link which conforms to BS 1362.

Appointment of notified bodies other than persons notified under the Low Voltage Directive

7.—(1) The Secretary of State may appoint a person as a notified body in accordance with the following provisions of this regulation.

(2) An appointment under this regulation shall be in writing and shall be subject to such conditions as the Secretary of State may impose for the time being, and such conditions may include conditions which are to apply on or following the termination or expiry of the appointment.

(3) In exercising the power conferred by paragraph (1) above, the Secretary of State may have regard to any matter appearing to him to be relevant, and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, he may have regard to any standards relating to the accreditation of such bodies appearing to him to be appropriate.

(4) Subject to the withdrawal of appointment of such a person, an appointment under this regulation may be for—

(a) the time being

or

(b) such a period as may be specified in the appointment.

Approval of standard plugs

8.—(1) Subject to the following provisions of this regulation, a standard plug shall be of a type approved by a notified body, and in respect of which such approval has not been cancelled, and in determining applications made to it for such approval the notified body shall not grant such approval unless it is satisfied—

(a) that plugs of that type conform to BS 1363; and

(b) by means of inspection or testing of samples of plugs of that type, that the manufacturer of the plug may reasonably be expected to ensure that normal production and design of the plug will result in plugs of that type conforming to that standard.

(2) Without prejudice to paragraph (3) below, where standard plugs have for the purposes of paragraph (1) above been subjected to a type test as described in BS 1363 and a particular sample has failed to satisfy the test, then, notwithstanding any provision in the standard whereby on a successful re-test of a sample such plugs are deemed to conform to the standard, such plugs shall be treated for the purposes of this regulation as not conforming to the standard.

(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs (1) and (2) above, a type of standard plug may be approved by a notified body where plugs of that type do not conform to BS 1363 if when determining an application for approval the notified body is satisfied—

- (a) that—
 - (i) the plugs are constructed using an alternative method of construction which provides an equivalent level of safety in respect of any risk of death or personal injury to plugs which conform to BS 1363 and is such that plugs of that type may reasonably be expected to be safe in use; and
 - (ii) except in respect of the matter for which alternative provision is made, plugs of that type conform to BS 1363; and
 - (iii) by means of inspection or testing of samples of plugs of that type, that the manufacturer of the plug may reasonably be expected to ensure that normal production and design of the plug will result in plugs of that type corresponding with the samples; or
- (b) where sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph does not apply, following inspection or testing of samples of the plug, that such plugs may reasonably be expected to be safe in use and is further satisfied, by inspection or testing of samples, that the manufacturer of the plug may reasonably be expected to ensure that normal production and design of the plug will result in plugs of that type corresponding with the samples.

(4) Subject to regulation 9 below and paragraphs (5) and (6) of this regulation, an approval granted by a notified body may be unconditional or subject to such conditions, which must be complied with if the approval is to apply, as the body considers appropriate in relation to the approval of the type of standard plug in question.

(5) A condition shall be attached to any such approval requiring the applicant, during the currency of the approval, to give to the notified body granting the approval such notice as may be specified in the approval of any changes in the standard plugs of the type approved.

(6) The conditions imposed pursuant to paragraph (4) above may be varied by the notified body which granted the approval, and a variation under this paragraph may include the imposition of new conditions or the withdrawal of conditions.

(7) Any approval given under paragraph (1) above shall remain in force for seven years or such shorter period as may be specified in the approval.

Refusals, cancellations and the imposition of conditions

9. Before making an unfavourable decision in respect of an applicant, that is to say—

- (a) refusing to grant approval pursuant to regulation 8 above;
- (b) the imposition of a condition on an approval or the making of a restrictive variation of a condition thereof pursuant to regulation 8 above in circumstances where the applicant has not indicated in writing that the type of standard plug concerned is suitable for use subject to that condition; or
- (c) the cancellation of an approval,

a notified body in the United Kingdom shall—

- (i) give notice in writing to the applicant or holder of the approval concerned, as the case may be, of the reasons why it proposes to make the unfavourable decision; and
- (ii) give the person to whom notice is given in sub-paragraph (i) above the opportunity of making representations within a period of 28 days of the notice being given as to why that body should make a favourable decision, and consider any representations which are made by that person within that period.

Electrical devices other than standard plugs

10.—(1) Subject to the following provisions of this regulation, any electrical device (other than a standard plug) specified in column 2 of Schedule 2 to these Regulations shall conform to the particular British Standard specified for such devices in column 3 of that Schedule.

(2) Any fuse link contained in or accompanying a round-pin plug conforming to BS 546 shall conform to BS 646.

PART II

Appliances to which Part II applies

11.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2) below, this Part applies to any appliance which—

- (a) is designed to operate at a voltage of not less than 200 volts; and
- (b) is designed to operate at a maximum rated input of not more than 13 amperes; and
- (c) is either—
 - (i) equipment which is fitted with a flexible cable or cord, is designed to be connected to a socket conforming to BS 1363 by means of that flexible cable or cord and a plug and is ordinarily intended to be so connected directly without the use of a cable connector; or
 - (ii) a flexible cable or cord which is connected to a portable socket or portable sockets and is designed to be connected to a socket conforming to BS 1363 by means of a plug; or
 - (iii) a flexible cable or cord which is designed to be connected to electrical equipment by means of an appliance coupler and to connect that electrical equipment to a socket conforming to BS 1363 by means of a plug; or
 - (iv) a flexible cable or cord which is designed to be connected by means of a cable connector to a flexible cable or cord fitted to electrical equipment, and which is intended to connect that electrical equipment to a socket conforming to BS 1363 by means of a plug; and
- (d) is ordinarily intended for domestic use.

(2) This Part does not apply to any appliance specified in Schedule 3 to these Regulations.

Prohibitions on supply etc. of appliances

12.—(1) Subject to the following provisions of this regulation, no person shall supply, offer for supply, agree to supply, expose for supply or possess for supply any appliance unless that appliance is correctly fitted with a standard plug which—

- (a) complies with the requirements of regulation 8 above; and
- (b) is fitted with a fuse link which conforms to BS 1362 and is rated in accordance with the appliance manufacturer's instructions, provided that in the absence of such instructions the fuse link may be rated in accordance with Table 2 of BS 1363.

(2) Paragraph (1) above shall not prohibit any person from supplying, offering to supply, agreeing to supply, exposing for supply or possessing for supply any appliance which does not comply with the requirements of that paragraph but which—

- (a) is correctly fitted with a non-UK plug which complies with the safety provisions of IEC 884-1; and

(b) is fitted with a conversion plug which complies with the requirements of paragraph (3) below and which encloses the fitted non-UK plug and can only be removed by the use of a tool.

(3) For the purposes of paragraph (2) above and subject to the provisions of paragraphs (4) to (8) below, a conversion plug shall be of a type approved by a notified body for use in conjunction with a non-UK plug which complies with the safety provisions of IEC 884-1, and in respect of which such approval has not been cancelled, and in determining applications made to it for such approval the notified body shall not grant such approval unless it is satisfied—

- (a) that, when used in conjunction with such a non-UK plug and when connected to a mains socket in the United Kingdom, conversion plugs of that type provide a level of safety equivalent to a standard plug which satisfies the requirements of regulation 8 above; and
- (b) by means of inspection or testing of samples, that the manufacturer of the conversion plug may reasonably be expected to ensure that normal production and design of the conversion plug will result in conversion plugs of that type corresponding with the samples.

(4) Subject to paragraphs (5) (6) and (7) below, an approval of a type of conversion plug granted by a notified body may be unconditional or subject to such conditions, which must be complied with if the approval is to apply, as the body considers appropriate in relation to the approval of the type of conversion plug in question.

(5) A condition shall be attached to any such approval requiring the applicant, during the currency of the approval, to give to the notified body granting the approval such notice as may be specified in the approval of any changes in the conversion plugs of the type approved.

(6) The conditions imposed pursuant to paragraph (4) above may be varied by the notified body which granted the approval, and variation under this paragraph may include the imposition of new conditions or the withdrawal of conditions.

(7) Before making an unfavourable decision in respect of an applicant, that is to say—

- (a) refusing to grant approval pursuant to paragraph (3) above;
- (b) the imposition of a condition on an approval or the making of a restrictive variation of a condition thereof pursuant to paragraph (4), (5) or (6) above in circumstances where the applicant has not indicated in writing that the type of conversion plug concerned is suitable for use subject to that condition; or
- (c) the cancellation of an approval,

a notified body in the United Kingdom shall—

- (i) give notice in writing to the applicant or holder of the approval concerned, as the case may be, of the reasons why it proposes to make the unfavourable decision; and
- (ii) give the person to whom notice is given in sub-paragraph (i) above the opportunity of making representations within a period of 28 days of the notice being given as to why that body should make a favourable decision, and consider any representations which are made by that person within that period.

(8) Any approval given under paragraph (3) above shall remain in force for seven years or for such shorter period as may be specified in the approval.

(9) Paragraph (1) above shall not prohibit any person from possessing for supply at any time before it is supplied, offered for supply or exposed for supply in the United Kingdom for the first time, or before it is agreed for the first time to supply it in the United Kingdom, any appliance which has been imported into the United Kingdom and which does not comply with the requirements of that paragraph.

PART III

Information requirements

13.—(1) No person shall supply, offer for supply, agree to supply, expose for supply or possess for supply any standard plug or conversion plug of a type approved by a notified body in accordance with these Regulations in respect of which the requirements of this Part are not satisfied.

(2) A standard plug or conversion plug of a type approved by a notified body in accordance with these Regulations shall be legibly marked with, or bear a label legibly marked with, words, marks or abbreviations clearly signifying approval by and identifying the body which approved the type in question.

(3) Without prejudice to any requirement of any British Standard, where it is necessary for the safe operation of any standard plug or conversion plug that the user should be aware of any particular characteristic of the plug, the necessary information shall be given by markings on the plug itself or, where this is not practicable, in a notice accompanying the plug.

(4) It shall not be sufficient compliance with this regulation to give information in a language other than English.

(5) Information shall not be given in connection with any standard plug or conversion plug by means of a misleading mark or otherwise which purports to indicate or might reasonably be mistaken for an indication that the plug is of a type approved by a particular notified body or (in the case of a standard plug) conforms to BS 1363, when the plug is not so approved or does not so conform to the standard, or when any approval has been cancelled.

5th July 1994

Strathclyde
Minister of State
Department of Trade and Industry