
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1989 No. 1796

The Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989

PART I

PRELIMINARY

Interpretation

- 3.—(1) Unless the context otherwise requires, any reference in these Regulations—
- (a) to a numbered regulation or Schedule is a reference to the regulation or Schedule bearing that number in these Regulations.
 - (b) to a numbered paragraph is to the paragraph bearing that number in the regulation or Schedule in which the reference occurs, and
 - (c) to a numbered or lettered sub-paragraph is to the sub-paragraph bearing that number in the paragraph in which the reference occurs.

(2) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, any expressions for which there is an entry in column 1 of the Table has the meaning given against it in column 2 or is to be construed in accordance with directions given against it in that column.

TABLE

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
“The Act”	The Road Traffic Act 1988.
“The Construction and Use Regulations”	The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986(1)
“The Designation of Approval Marks Regulations”	The Motor Vehicles (Designation of Approval Marks) Regulations 1979(2)
“Agricultural vehicle”	A vehicle constructed or adapted for agriculture, grass cutting, forestry, land levelling, dredging or similar operations and primarily used for one or more of these purposes, and includes any trailer drawn by an agricultural vehicle.
“Angles of visibility”	A requirement for a lamp or reflector fitted to a vehicle to have specified horizontal and vertical angles of visibility is a requirement that at least 50 per cent of the apparent surface must

(1) S.I.1986/1078, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

(2) S.I. 1979/1088; the relevant amending instruments are S.I. 1982/1479, 1983/1602, 1985/113 and 1986/369.

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
	be visible from any point within those angles when every door, tailgate, boot lid, engine cover, cab or other movable part of the vehicle is in the closed position.
“Apparent surface”	For any given direction of observation, is the orthogonal projection of a light-emitting surface in a plane perpendicular to the direction of observation and touching that surface.
“Articulated bus”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Articulated vehicle”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Breakdown vehicle”	A vehicle used to attend an accident or breakdown or to draw a broken down vehicle.
“Bus”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Caravan”	A trailer which is constructed (and not merely adapted) for human habitation.
“cc”	Cubic centimetre or centimetres (as the case may be).
“Circuit-closed tell-tale”	A light showing that a device has been switched on.
“cm”	Centimetre or centimetres (as the case may be).
“cm ² ”	Square centimetre or centimetres (as the case may be).
“Combat vehicle”	A vehicle of a type described at item 1, 2 or 3 in column 1 of Schedule 1 to the Motor Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) General Order 1979 ⁽³⁾
“Community Directive 76/756/EEC , as amended”	Council Directive 76/756/EEC of 27.7.76 (O.J.L262, 27.9.76, p.1) as amended by Commission Directive 80/233/EEC of 21.11.79 (O.J.L51, 25.2.80, p.8), Commission Directive 82/244/EEC of 17.3.82 (O.J.L109, 22.4.82, p.31), Council Directive 83/276/EEC of 26.5.83 (O.J.L151, 9.6.83, p.47), Commission Directive 84/8/EEC of 14.12.83 (O.J.L9, 12.1.84, p.24) and Commission Directive 89/278/EEC of 23.3.89 (O.J.L109, 20.4.89, p.38).
“Daytime hours”	The time between half an hour before sunrise and half an hour after sunset.

(3) S.I. [1979/1198](#), to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
“Dim-dip device”	A device which is capable of causing a dipped-beam headlamp to operate at reduced intensity.
“Dipped beam”	A beam of light emitted by a lamp which illuminates the road ahead of the vehicle without causing undue dazzle or discomfort to oncoming drivers or other road users.
“Direction indicator”	A lamp on a vehicle used to indicate to other road users that the driver intends to change direction to the right or to the left.
“Dual-purpose vehicle”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Emergency vehicle”	<p>A motor vehicle of any of the following descriptions—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a vehicle used for fire brigade, ambulance or police purposes; (b) an ambulance, being a vehicle (other than an invalid carriage) which is constructed or adapted for the purposes of conveying sick, injured or disabled persons and which is used for such purposes; (c) a vehicle owned by a body formed primarily for the purposes of fire salvage and used for those or similar purposes; (d) a vehicle owned by the Forestry Commission or by a local authority and used from time to time for the purposes of fighting fires; (e) a vehicle owned by the Secretary of State for Defence and used— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) for the purposes of the disposal of bombs or explosives, (ii) by the Naval Emergency Monitoring Organisation for the purposes of a nuclear accident or an incident involving radioactivity, (iii) by the Royal Air Force Mountain Rescue Service for the purposes of rescue operations or any other emergencies, or (iv) by the Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit; (f) a vehicle primarily used for the purposes of the Blood Transfusion Service provided under the National Health Service Act 1977⁽⁴⁾ or under the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978⁽⁵⁾;

(4) 1977 c. 49.

(5) 1978 c. 29.

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (g) a vehicle used by Her Majesty's Coastguard or Coastguard Auxiliary Service for the purposes of giving aid to persons in danger or vessels indistress on or near the coast; (h) a vehicle owned by the British Coal Corporation and used for the purposes of rescue operations at mines; (i) a vehicle owned by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and used for the purposes of launching lifeboats; and (j) a vehicle primarily used for the purposes of conveying any human tissue for transplanting or similar purposes.
"End-outline marker lamp"	A lamp fitted near the outer edge of a vehicle in addition to the front and rear position lamps to indicate the presence of a wide vehicle.
"Engineering plant"	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
"Extreme outer edge"	<p>In relation to a side of a vehicle, the vertical plane parallel with the longitudinal axis of the vehicle, and coinciding with its lateral outer edge, disregarding the projection of—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) so much of the distortion of any tyre as is caused by the weight of the vehicle, (b) any connections for tyre pressure gauges, (c) any anti-skid devices which may be mounted on the wheels, (d) rear-view mirrors, (e) lamps and reflectors, (f) customs seals affixed to the vehicle, and devices for securing and protecting such seals, and (g) special equipment.
"Front fog lamp"	A lamp used to improve the illumination of the road in front of a motor vehicle in conditions of seriously reduced visibility.
"Front position lamp"	A lamp used to indicate the presence and width of a vehicle when viewed from the front.
"First used"	References to the date of first use of a vehicle shall be construed in accordance with regulation 3 (3) of the Construction and Use Regulations.
"Hazard warning signal device"	A device which is capable of causing all the direction indicators with which a vehicle, or a combination of vehicles, is fitted to operate simultaneously.

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
“Headlamp”	A lamp used to illuminate the road in front of a vehicle and which is not a front fog lamp.
“Headlamp levelling device”	<p>Either—</p> <p>(a) an automatic headlamp levelling device by means of which the downward inclination of any dipped-beam headlamp is automatically maintained regardless of the load on the vehicle, or</p> <p>(b) a manual headlamp levelling device by means of which the downward inclination of any dipped-beam headlamp may be adjusted by a manual control operable from the driving seat of the vehicle.</p>
“Home forces”	The naval, military or air forces of Her Majesty raised in the United Kingdom.
“Home forces' vehicle”	A vehicle owned by, or in the service of, the home forces and used for naval, military or air force purposes.
“Horse-drawn”	In relation to a vehicle, means that the vehicle is drawn by a horse or other animal.
“Hours of darkness”	The time between half an hour after sunset and half an hour before sunrise.
“Illuminated area”	<p>The expression, in relation to a headlamp, front fog lamp and reversing lamp, in each case fitted with a reflector, means the orthogonal projection of the full aperture of the reflector on a plane (touching the surface of the lamp) at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle to which the lamp is fitted. If the light-emitting surface extends over only part of the full aperture of the reflector, then the projection of only that part shall be taken into account. In the case of a dipped-beam headlamp, the illuminated area is limited by the apparent trace of the cut-off on the lens.</p> <p>The expression, in relation to any other lamp, means the part of the orthogonal projection of the light-emitting surface on a plane (touching the surface of the lamp) at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle to which it is fitted, the boundary of which is such that if the straight edge of an opaque screen touches it at any point 98 per cent of the total intensity of the light is shown in the direction parallel to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle. Accordingly, for the purposes of determining the lower,</p>

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
	upper and lateral edges of the lamp, only a screen placed with its straight edge horizontally or vertically needs to be considered.
“Industrial tractor”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Installation and performance requirements”	In relation to any lamp, reflector, rear marking or device, the requirements specified in the Schedules to these Regulations relating to that lamp, reflector, rear marking or device.
“Invalid carriage”	A mechanically propelled vehicle constructed or adapted for the carriage of one person, being a person suffering from some physical defect or disability.
“Kerbside weight”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“kg”	Kilogram or kilograms (as the case may be).
“Light-emitting surface”	In relation to a lamp, that part of the exterior surface of the lens through which light is emitted when the lamp is lit, and in relation to a retro reflector that part of the exterior surface of the retro reflector from which light can be reflected.
“m”	Metre or metres (as the case may be).
“Main beam”	A beam of light emitted by a headlamp which illuminates the road over a long distance ahead of the vehicle.
“Matched pair”	In relation to lamps, a pair of lamps in respect of which— (a) both lamps emit light of substantially the same colour and intensity, and (b) both lamps are of the same size and of such a shape that they are symmetrical to one another.
“Maximum distance from the side of the vehicle”	The expression means— (a) in relation to a lamp fitted to a vehicle, the shortest distance from the boundary of the illuminated area to an extreme outer edge of the vehicle, and (b) in relation to a retro reflector fitted to a vehicle, the shortest distance from the boundary of the reflecting area to an extreme outer edge of the vehicle.
“Maximum gross weight”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
“Maximum height above the ground”	The height above which no part of the illuminated area in the case of a lamp, or the reflecting area in the case of a retro reflector, extends when the vehicle is at its kerbside weight and when each tyre with which the vehicle is fitted is inflated to the pressure recommended by the manufacturer of the vehicle.
“Maximum speed”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Minimum height above the ground”	The height below which no part of the illuminated area in the case of a lamp, or the reflecting area in the case of a retro reflector, extends when the vehicle is at its kerbside weight and when each tyre with which the vehicle is fitted is inflated to the pressure recommended by the manufacturer of the vehicle.
“mm”	Millimetre or millimetres (as the case may be).
“Motor bicycle combination”	A combination of a solo motor bicycle and a sidecar.
“Motor tractor”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Motorway”	Has the same meaning as in Schedule 6 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984(6).
“Movable platform”	A platform which is attached to, and may be moved by means of, an extendible boom.
“mph”	Mile per hour or miles per hour (as the case may be).
“Obligatory”	In relation to a lamp, reflector, rear marking or device, means a lamp, reflector, rear marking or device with which a vehicle, its load or equipment is required by these Regulations to be fitted.
“Operational tell-tale”	A warning device readily visible or audible to the driver and showing whether a device that has been switched on is operating correctly or not.
“Optional”	In relation to a lamp, reflector, rear marking or device, means a lamp, reflector, rear marking or device with which a vehicle, its load or equipment is not required by these Regulations to be fitted.

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
“Overall length”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Overall width”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Pair”	<p>In relation to lamps, reflectors or rear markings means a pair of lamps, reflectors or rear markings, including a matched pair, one on each side of the vehicle, in respect of which the following conditions are met—</p> <p>(a) each lamp, reflector or rear marking is at the same height above the ground, and</p> <p>(b) each lamp, reflector or rear marking is at the same distance from the extreme outer edge of the vehicle.</p> <p>In the case of an asymmetric vehicle, those conditions shall be deemed to be met if they are as near as practicable to being met.</p>
“Passenger vehicle”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Pedal cycle”	A vehicle which is not constructed or adapted to be propelled by mechanical power and which is equipped with pedals, including an electrically-assisted pedal cycle prescribed for the purposes of section 189 of the Act and section 140 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
“Pedal retro reflector”	A retro reflector attached to or incorporated in the pedals of a pedal cycle or motor bicycle.
“Pedestrian-controlled vehicle”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Rear fog lamp”	A lamp used to render a vehicle more readily visible from the rear in conditions of seriously reduced visibility.
“Rear position lamp”	A lamp used to indicate the presence and width of a vehicle when viewed from the rear.
“Rear retro reflector”	A retro reflector used to indicate the presence and width of a vehicle when viewed from the rear.
“Rear registration plate lamp”	A lamp used to illuminate the rear registration plate.
“Reflecting area”	In relation to a retro reflector fitted to a vehicle, the area of the orthogonal projection on a vertical plane (touching the surface of the reflector)—

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
	(a) at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle of that part of the reflector designed to reflect light in the case of a front or a rear retro reflector, and (b) parallel to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle of that part of the reflector designed to reflect light in the case of a side retro reflector.
“Reversing lamp”	A lamp used to illuminate the road to the rear of a vehicle for the purpose of reversing and to warn other road users that the vehicle is reversing or about to reverse.
“Road clearance vehicle”	A mechanically propelled vehicle used for dealing with frost, ice or snow on roads.
“Running lamp”	A lamp (not being a front position lamp, an end-outline marker lamp, headlamp or front fog lamp) used to make the presence of a moving motor vehicle readily visible from the front.
“Separation distance”	In relation to two lamps or two retro reflectors the expression means, except where otherwise specified, the shortest distance between the orthogonal projections in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle of the illuminated areas of the two lamps or the reflecting areas of the two reflectors.
“Service braking system”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Side marker lamp”	A lamp fitted to the side of a vehicle or its load and used to render the vehicle more visible to other road users.
“Side retro reflector”	A reflector fitted to the side of a vehicle or its load and used to render the vehicle more visible from the side.
“Solo motor bicycle”	A motor bicycle without a sidecar.
“Special equipment”	A movable platform fitted to a vehicle, the apparatus for moving the platform and any jacks fitted to the vehicle for stabilising it while the movable platform is in use.
“Special warning lamp”	A lamp, fitted to the front or rear of a vehicle, capable of emitting a blue flashing light and not any other kind of light.
“Stop lamp”	A lamp used to indicate to road users that the brakes of a vehicle or combination of vehicles are being applied.

(1) <i>Expression</i>	(2) <i>Meaning</i>
“Traffic sign”	Has the same meaning given by section 64(1) of the Act.
“Trailer”	A vehicle constructed or adapted to be drawn by another vehicle.
“Unrestricted dual-carriageway road”	A dual-carriageway within the meaning given by paragraph 2 of Schedule 6 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 on which a motor vehicle may lawfully be driven at a speed exceeding 50 mph.
“Unladen weight”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Vehicle in the service of a visiting force or of a headquarters”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Visiting vehicle”	Has the meaning given by regulation 3(1) of the Motor Vehicles (International Circulation) Regulations 1971(7).
“Warning beacon”	A lamp that is capable of emitting a flashing or rotating beam of light throughout 360° in the horizontal plane.
“Wheel”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations (see also paragraph (7)).
“Wheeled”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Work lamp”	A lamp used to illuminate a working area or the scene of an accident, breakdown or roadworks in the vicinity of the vehicle to which it is fitted.
“Works trailer”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.
“Works truck”	Has the same meaning as in the Construction and Use Regulations.

(3) Material designed primarily to reflect light is, when reflecting light, to be treated for the purposes of these Regulations as showing a light, and material capable of reflecting an image is not, when reflecting the image of a light, to be so treated.

(4) In these Regulations a reference to one lamp, except in the case of a dipped-beam headlamp, a main-beam headlamp and a front fog lamp, includes any combination of two or more lamps, whether identical or not, having the same function and emitting light of the same colour, if it comprises devices the aggregate illuminated area of which occupies 60 per cent or more of the area of the smallest rectangle circumscribing those illuminated areas.

(5) In these Regulations a reference to two lamps includes—

(a) a single illuminated area which—

- (i) is placed symmetrically in relation to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle,
 - (ii) extends on both sides to within 400 mm of the extreme outer edge of the vehicle,
 - (iii) is not less than 800 mm long, and
 - (iv) is illuminated by not less than two sources of light, and
- (b) any number of illuminated areas which–
- (i) are juxtaposed,
 - (ii) if on the same transverse plane have illuminated areas which occupy not less than 60 per cent of the area of the smallest rectangle circumscribing their illuminated areas,
 - (iii) are placed symmetrically in relation to the median longitudinal plane of the vehicle,
 - (iv) extend on both sides to within 400 mm of the extreme outer edge of the vehicle,
 - (v) do not have a total length of less than 800 mm, and
 - (vi) are illuminated by not less than two sources of light.

(6) Where a part fitted to a vehicle is required by these Regulations to be marked with a British Standard mark, the requirements shall not be regarded as met unless, in addition to being marked as required, the part complied with the relevant British Standard at the time when the part was first fitted to the vehicle.

(7) A reference in these Regulations to the number of wheels of a vehicle shall be construed in accordance with regulation 3 of the Construction and Use Regulations.

(8) A reference in a Schedule to there being no requirement in relation to a lamp, reflector, rear marking or device is without prejudice to any other provision in these Regulations affecting same.