THE PRESSURE SYSTEMS SAFETY REGULATIONS

Health & Safety Regulations - The Safe Choice

1. The Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000 (PSSR) Statutory Instrument 2000 No.128 came into force on 21st February 2000. However these are a revision of the earlier Pressure Systems & Transportable Gas Containers Regulations 1989: SI 2169 (PSTGCR), which became enforceable under the law on 1st July 1994.

   The PSTGCR regulations have now been legally revoked in favour of the newer PSSR regulations, which are fully operational and enforceable under the law.

2. It is important to realise that Safety Regulations for compressed air (and other fluids) pressure systems have been operational for some 6 years now. Furthermore these are in fact Pressure **"Systems"** Regulations and not just Pressure **"Vessels"** Regulations.

3. Section 36 in Part 2 of the Factories Act 1961 which dealt with the statutory requirements applying to **Air Receivers** is now repealed in it's entirety and replaced by the new regulations.

4. The examination of **Air Receivers,** along with protective devices and many other items of equipment in a compressed air pressure system are dealt with under the much broader requirements of Regulation 8 - **The Written Scheme of Examination.**

5. Competent persons only, may produce or endorse Written Schemes of Examination. The competent person should be a qualified engineer with adequate relevant experience in compressed air, knowledge of the law, and the regulated codes of practice, examination and inspection techniques. He should have an understanding of the effects and functional operation of the pressure system and it's relevant fluid, e.g. compressed air.

6. The owner and user of a compressed air pressure system has responsibility for complying with all the regulations which include design and construction (Regulation 4), repair and modification (Regulation 13) Installation (Regulation 6) Safe Operating Limits (Regulation 7) Operating Instructions (Regulation 11) and Maintenance (Regulation 12).

7. It therefore follows that an Engineer from the compressed air industry is better qualified than any to help owners and users of compressed air pressure systems to comply with the new regulations.

8. Air Equipment prepare a Written Scheme of Examination to cover **all** necessary items of equipment under the regulations not just so called "insurance items".

9. The Written Scheme of Examination should include a system drawing (Schematic) using graphic pneumatic symbols complying to BS ISO 1219. This is recommended by the British Compressed Air Society and is specified in the Health & Safety Executive publication HSG39 (Second Edition 1998), Clause 74.

10. HSE say that the important points that their Inspectors will be looking for under the regulations are as follows:

    10.1 The basis on which the safe operating limits of the system have been established (Reg. 7)

    10.2 Does the owner and user of the pressure system have an appropriate Written Scheme of Examination (Reg. 8)

    10.3 Is proper maintenance taking place (Reg. 12)

10. Are you aware of the powers, which HSE Inspectors have under this regulation?

    They can:

    10.1 Give advice during the site visit and ask for improvement when appropriate

    10.2 Bring out a **legal notice** on the owner/user of the Pressure System.

        10.2.1. Give 21 day's notice of corrective action required.

        10.2.2 Prohibition Notice - which stops work immediately.

    10.3 Carry out **Prosecution.**

        10.3.1. A successful prosecution by HSE carries an allowable maximum fine in a Magistrates Court of £20,000

        10.3.2 A successful prosecution carried through in the Crown Court provides for an unlimited fine and/or the imprisonment of individuals. (Generally the M.D or General Manager)

11. Do you know that the ultimate responsibility rests with the owner or user of a pressure system to comply with the Regulations?