

Health and Safety Executive Paper

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THE LOCAL AUTHORITY FORUM

The application of PUWER '98 braking requirements for woodworking machines for use in schools and colleges

Issue

1 There is a potential conflict between the braking requirements for woodworking machinery as required under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER 98) and BS 4163:2000 "Health and Safety for Design and Technology in Schools and Similar Establishments". If BS 4163:2000 is applied the requirements of PUWER 98 can not be met and therefore schools and colleges may find themselves in breach of these regulations.

Timing

1 Routine.

You should however be aware that the first date of a series, for compliance with these requirements is **5 December 2003**. This is for higher risk machines.

Recommendation

(a) That HSE will be writing to members of the LA Forum and HIFEAC/SEAC as representatives of the local authority and hence education world, informing of the issue and highlighting the possible need to make changes in workshops.

(b) To advise LA Forum members that HSE is considering the need to amend BS 4163:2000, so that the standard specifies a lockable means of isolation which:

- is under the control of the person in charge of the workshop, and
- disconnects all the power to the woodworking machines after the machines have stopped.

Background

2 Safe Use of Woodworking Machinery (L114) is the ACoP which sets out the steps to be taken to comply with PUWER 98. Regulation 15 of PUWER relates to the retrospective braking for certain classes of woodworking machinery. Machinery for which there is a risk of contact with the tool as the machine runs down, is required to be fitted with an automatic brake which stops the machine in a sufficiently short time (defined in CEN standards as 10 seconds or less).

3 PUWER 98 does not apply to school children and students, however it will apply to technicians and teachers who will use the equipment. Section 3 of HSWA 1974 will apply and therefore the requirements of PUWER must be met.

4 The ACoP (L114) lays down a timetable when braking must be fitted.

Circular saw benches, dimension saws, powered and hand-fed cross-cut saws, tenoning machines and combined machines incorporating a circular saw and/or a tenoning attachment must have brakes fitted by 5 December 2003.

For other machines dates of 5 December 2005 and 5 December 2008 apply.

5 BS 4163:2000 recommends that wall mounted emergency stops be fitted around the workshop as a safety precaution.

6 The conflict may occur because the wall mounted emergency stops provided in many schools and colleges are of such a design that they would immediately cut the power supply to the machines and therefore prevent electrically operated braking devices from functioning.

7 Woodworking machines used in schools are generally small and have a short run down time. They therefore will comply with the requirements of PUWER 98.

8 Woodworking machines used in colleges of further education tend to be of industrial size and will therefore have run down times in excess of 10 seconds.

Argument

9 New machinery is required to be fitted with an automatic brake. Use of the existing wall mounted emergency stop system would override this brake which is a primary safeguard for these machines. This would lead to a breach of the legislation (PUWER).

10 If braking is introduced when an existing wall mounted emergency stop system is in place further risks could be introduced as there could be a greater risk of kick back.

11 A sensible approach could be the use of an isolation switch within the workshop which could be used to isolate and lock off the machines, but not used for stopping the machines.

12 If schools and colleges wish to maintain the wall mounted emergency stop system then a technical solution exists which provides DC current by way of a battery. This is a costly solution.

Consultation

13 SEAC, HIFEAC, Ag and Wood Sector(HSE).

Presentation

14 Issue has been discussed at SEAC and HIFEAC meetings.

15 SIM to be prepared following negotiation with the BSI.

Other Implications

1 Cost implications for schools, colleges and local authorities to comply with PUWER and install braking is in the region of £500-800 per machine.

2 Other costs for consideration are those for disconnection of the current emergency stop system.

Action

3 Proposals (based on paragraph 11) for amending the BS will be drawn up and forwarded to BSI.

4 A SIM will be prepared.