

Technical Bulletin 076

Developed with HSE



Title: Electronic records and signatures - Information for landlords and gas installation businesses

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This Technical Bulletin provides guidance to Gas Safe registered Businesses/engineers on the use and control of electronic records with respect to Landlord's Gas Safety Records

Introduction

The following information has been issued as official guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It provides guidance on the use and controls required when using "electronic" formats in respect to Landlord's Gas Safety Records (LGSR) and the use of "electronic signatures".

Background

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations⁽¹⁾ (GSIUR), require landlords to arrange for annual safety checks of relevant gas appliances and flues and to keep a record of that check for a minimum period of 2 years. Copies of the record have to be provided to tenants, who also have rights to inspect the original on request. The particulars to be included on the Landlord's Gas Safety record (LGSR) check are prescribed in the legislation and include the name, signature and the registration number of the Gas Safe registered engineer carrying out the check.

The introduction of legislation relating to electronic signatures and records permits both the record and signature to be in electronic format. Many gas installation businesses and landlords are adopting electronic systems across the range of their activities and these offer advantages, particularly in the areas of work planning and monitoring. However, there have been concerns that the use of electronic LGSRs may lead to an increased potential for forgery/alteration and hence a reduction in the intended safety assurance for tenants.

The following guidance confirms a goal-setting approach, developed following discussions with industry and government, which will allow industry to develop electronic solutions compatible with the necessary security objectives.

Guidance

Gas Safe registered engineers/businesses may provide a landlord with a LGSR in electronic format with an electronic signature. The landlord then keeps this as the original record. This record should:

- Be capable of being reproduced in hard copy format when required (e.g. for the tenant/HSE/housing department);

- Be secure from loss and interference;
- Uniquely identify the Gas Safe registered engineer who carried out the safety check. This could be, for example, an electronic representation of the Gas Safe registered engineer's signature, a scanned signature, a payroll number unique to the Gas Safe registered engineer, the name of the Gas Safe registered engineer etc; the employer needs to have secure systems that link the individual operative to the unique identifier.

These objectives should be achieved by a combination of management systems and appropriate technology in accordance with relevant British/European Standards.

The Gas Safe registered engineer/business may also, with the landlord's agreement, send or give a copy of the record directly to the tenant to provide additional assurance of its source. The record will include details of the Gas Safe registered engineer/businesses registration number and the addition of the Gas Safe Register enquiry line telephone number⁽²⁾ would encourage the tenant to check the validity of Gas Safe registered engineer/business.

In order to safeguard the Gas Safe registered engineer/business in case the landlord subsequently alters the record, he/she should keep their own secure copy to allow subsequent verification.

Further information may be obtained from the following relevant legislation and standards (not an exhaustive list⁽³⁾).

Bibliography

(1) Gas Safety (installation and Use) Regulations 1998

(2) Gas Safe Register contact number 0800 4085577 or 01256 650005

(3) Legislation (not an exhaustive list)

- *The Electronic Signatures Regulations 2002;*
- *Data Protection Act 1998;*
- *BS ISO/IEC 27002: 2005, BS 7799-1: 2005, BS ISO/IEC 17799: 2005 Information technology. Security techniques. Code of practice for information security management*
- *BS ISO/IEC 27001:2005/BS 7799-2:2005 Information technology. Security techniques. Information security management systems. Requirements*
- *BS ISO 15489-1: 2001 Information and documentation records management. General;*
- *BIP 0025-1: 2002 -Effective records management. A management guide to the value of BS ISO 15489-1*

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