
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1987 No. 603

CONSUMER PROTECTION

The Plugs and Sockets etc. (Safety) Regulations 1987

Made - - - - *27th March 1987*

Coming into force

*All regulations except
regulation 5(1),*

*In accordance with
regulation 1(2).*

regulation 5(1)

1st September 1988

Whereas the Secretary of State has, in accordance with section 1(4) of the Consumer Safety Act 1978⁽¹⁾, consulted such organisations as appear to him to be representative of interests substantially affected by these Regulations, such other persons as he considers appropriate and the Health and Safety Commission:

And whereas the Secretary of State has, in accordance with section 1(5) of the Consumer Protection Act 1961⁽²⁾, consulted with such persons and bodies of persons as appear to him requisite:

And whereas a draft of these Regulations has been approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament pursuant to section 7(7) of the said Act of 1978:

Now, therefore, the Secretary of State, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by section 1 of, and paragraph 13 of Schedule 2 to, the said Act of 1978, and by section 1 of the said Act of 1961, hereby makes the following Regulations:—

Citation, commencement and revocation

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Plugs and Sockets etc. (Safety) Regulations 1987.

(2) These Regulations, except Regulation 5(1), shall come into force on 1st September 1987 in relation to the supply, offering to supply, agreeing to supply, exposing for supply or possessing for supply of goods by the manufacturer or importer into the United Kingdom or, in the case of goods manufactured or imported into the United Kingdom on behalf of another person, by that other person and, subject to that, shall come into force on 1st March 1988.

(3) Regulation 5(1) shall come into force on 1st September 1988.

(1) 1978 c. 38; a new Schedule 2 was substituted by section 14 of, and Schedule 1 to, the Consumer Safety (Amendment) Act 1986 (c. 29).
(2) 1961 c. 40.

(4) The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1975⁽³⁾ and the Electrical Equipment (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations 1976⁽⁴⁾ shall cease to apply—

- (a) on 1st September 1987 in relation to the sale or possession for the purpose of sale of electrical devices to which these Regulations apply by the manufacturer or importer into Great Britain or, in the case of devices manufactured or imported into Great Britain on behalf of another person, by that other person; and
- (b) on 1st March 1988 in relation to the sale or possession for the purpose of sale of electrical devices to which these Regulations apply by any other person.

Interpretation

2.—(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 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;

“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 tools;

“cartridge” means a totally enclosing fuse element container consisting of insulating material, tubular in form and having its ends enclosed by metallic caps;

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

“electrical device” means a device to which these Regulations apply by virtue of Regulation 3 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;

“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 purpose of connecting to a socket any electrical equipment to which the device is attached by means of a flexible cable or cord;

“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;

“specified person” means a person specified in Schedule 2 to these Regulations; and

(3) S.I.1975/1366.

(4) S.I. 1976/1208.

“standard plug” means a plug, which carries three pins substantially rectangular in form and designed for engagement with a socket, made to the dimensions specified in British Standard 1363: 1984 referred to in Schedule 3 to these Regulations.

(2) In these Regulations—

- (a) where any standard is mentioned in these Regulations, that reference is a reference to that standard as it has effect on the date on which these Regulations are made;
- (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 that date; and
- (c) any reference to a British Standard of a particular number published on, or to come into effect on, a particular date is a reference to the British Standard Specification of that number published by the British Standards Institution on, or to come into effect on, the date in question.

Electrical devices to which the Regulations apply

3.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) below, these Regulations apply to the following devices namely any plug, socket or adaptor designed for domestic use at a voltage of not less than 50 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 other such plugs and adaptors but do not apply to any electrical device specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations.

(2) These Regulations do 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 which requires the use of tools.

(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 3 to these Regulations, the Regulations only apply to the extent that it is practicable to do so.

Prohibitions on supply etc.

4. No person shall supply, offer for supply, agree to supply, expose for supply or possess for supply any electrical device in respect of which any of the requirements of these Regulations are not satisfied.

Standard plugs

5.—(1) Subject to the following provisions of this regulation, a standard plug shall be of a kind approved by a specified person.

(2) Until 31st August 1988 a standard plug shall conform to British Standard 1363: 1984 referred to in Schedule 3 to these Regulations or shall provide an equivalent level of safety to those which do so conform.

(3) A standard plug shall not contain or be accompanied by a fuse link other than one which conforms to British Standard 1362: 1973 referred to in Schedule 3 to these Regulations.

Electrical devices other than standard plugs

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

(2) Paragraph (1) above shall not apply to any plug which is designed for the purpose of connecting any electrical apparatus to a telecommunication system and which conforms to British Standard 6312: 1982 published to come into operation on 31st July 1982⁽⁵⁾ or to any socket which is designed for the engagement of such a plug.

(3) A round-pin plug, namely a plug which carries pins substantially cylindrical in form, which conforms to British Standard 546: 1950 referred to in Schedule 3 to these Regulations, shall not contain or be accompanied by a fuse link other than one which conforms to British Standard 646: 1958, referred to in the said Schedule.

Approval of kinds of electrical devices

7.—(1) Subject to the following provisions of this regulation, a specified person may, on application made to him by the manufacturer or supplier of an electrical device and after payment of the prescribed fee, approve a kind of such a device.

(2) In the case of an application made to the Secretary of State under paragraph (1) above, the Secretary of State may require the applicant to submit the application to another specified person for approval under paragraph (1) above.

(3) The prescribed fee payable under paragraph (1) above shall consist of the costs of the specified person of and in connection with the functions carried out or to be carried out by him in approving kinds of devices under this regulation.

(4) The specified person shall consider any such application but shall not give an approval under paragraph (1) above unless the applicant has submitted to him—

- (a) such samples of the relevant kind of device as he may reasonably require; and
- (b) such information relevant to the application (including test reports) as he may reasonably require.

(5) Subject to paragraphs (6) to (8) below, no specified person shall approve a kind of electrical device under these Regulations unless—

- (a) the person is satisfied that devices of that kind will conform to the British Standard in relation to the device specified in Schedule 3 to these Regulations for the purposes of these Regulations; and
- (b) the person is satisfied, by inspection or testing of devices, that the manufacturer of the device may reasonably be expected to ensure that normal production and design of the device will result in devices of that kind conforming to the standard.

(6) Where electrical devices of any kind have for the purposes of paragraph (5) above been subjected to a type test as described in a British Standard and a particular sample has failed to satisfy the test, then, notwithstanding any provision in the standard whereby on a successful retest of a sample devices of that kind are deemed to conform to the standard, electrical devices of that kind shall be treated for the purposes of this regulation as not conforming to the standard.

(7) Where an electrical device of the kind in question does not conform to a British Standard specified in Schedule 3 to these Regulations but is so constructed that it incorporates an alternative method of construction which provides an equivalent level of safety to devices which do so conform in respect of any risk of death or personal injury, a specified person may approve kinds of such devices, notwithstanding that they do not satisfy the provision made by the standard in relation to the risk covered by the provision made, so long as—

- (a) the person is satisfied that—
 - (i) the alternative method of construction provides an equivalent level of safety and is such that devices of that kind may reasonably be expected to be safe in use; and

- (ii) except in respect of the matter for which alternative provision is made, devices of that kind conform to the standard in question for the purposes of these Regulations; and
- (b) where samples of the device which incorporate the alternative method of construction have been tested, the person is satisfied, by inspection or testing of devices, that the manufacturer of the device may reasonably be expected to ensure that normal production and design of the device will result in devices of that kind corresponding with the samples.

(8) Where an electrical device of the kind in question does not conform to a British Standard so specified and paragraph (7) above does not apply, no specified person shall approve a kind of electrical device unless samples of the device have been tested and the person is satisfied that such devices may reasonably be expected to be safe in use and is further satisfied, by inspection or testing, that the manufacturer of the device may reasonably be expected to ensure that normal production and design of the device will correspond with the samples.

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

(10) A condition shall be attached to any such approval requiring the applicant, during the currency of the approval, to give to the specified person granting the approval such notice as may be specified in the approval of any changes in the devices of the kind approved.

Refusals, alterations and cancellations of approvals

8.—(1) Where the specified person to whom an application has been made under regulation 7(1) or (2) above for approval of a kind of electrical device is minded to refuse the approval, he shall serve a notice on the applicant to that effect stating—

- (a) his reasons; and
- (b) that the applicant may within 28 days after the date of service of the notice serve written representations on him as to why the approval should not be refused.

(2) The specified person shall consider any representations served on him under paragraph (1) above and within 28 days after the date of the service on him of the representations shall serve a notice on the applicant and (unless the specified person is the Secretary of State) on the Secretary of State stating his decision.

(3) Where at any time during the currency of an approval the specified person is of the opinion that the approval should be altered or cancelled, he shall serve on the manufacturer or supplier of the relevant device a notice to that effect stating—

- (a) his reasons;
- (b) in the case of an alteration, the alteration he is minded to make; and
- (c) that the manufacturer or supplier may within 28 days after the date of service of the notice serve written representations on him as to why the approval should not be altered or cancelled as the case may be.

(4) The specified person shall consider any representations served on him under paragraph (3) above and within 28 days after the date of the service on him of the representations shall serve a notice on the manufacturer or supplier and (unless the specified person is the Secretary of State) on the Secretary of State stating his decision and, if the decision is to alter or cancel the approval, giving the date from which the approval is altered or cancelled, as the case may be, not being a date earlier than the date of service of the notice and, in the case of an alteration, details of the alteration.

(5) Every notice under paragraph (2) or (4) above shall contain a statement of the right of appeal under paragraph (6) below and shall give particulars of the time within which, the manner in which and the address at which such an appeal can be lodged.

(6) A person aggrieved by a decision under paragraph (2) or (4) above may, not later than 6 weeks from the date of service of the notice of the decision, give notice to the Secretary of State, at the address stated for lodging of appeals in the notice of the decision, of his intention to appeal against the decision.

(7) If the grounds of appeal are not stated in the notice under paragraph (6) above, the appellant shall, not later than 6 weeks from the giving of that notice, give to the Secretary of State at the address referred to in that paragraph a further notice stating the grounds of the appeal.

(8) The Secretary of State may appoint to hear an appeal on his behalf any person (in this regulation referred to as “appointed person”) who appears to him by reason of his knowledge or experience to be qualified to do so; and except where he appoints only one such person in relation to an appeal he may determine which of them is to preside.

(9) The Secretary of State may appoint any person to give the appointed person advice on matters of law or on any other matter relating to the appeal.

(10) The Secretary of State may direct that oral representations shall be heard by an appointed person on his behalf and at any such hearing the appointed person shall give such directions as appear to be appropriate for the proper conduct of the hearing.

(11) Where the appeal is referred to any appointed person and, where a direction under paragraph (10) above has been made, he has completed any hearing of oral representations, he shall take into account any representations made and evidence produced in the course of the appeal and give to the Secretary of State a reasoned report in writing thereon.

(12) If the Secretary of State decides to allow the appeal, he shall give such directions for disposing of the appeal as he thinks fit.

(13) If the Secretary of State decides to dismiss the appeal, the appellant shall be entitled to receive a copy of any report relating to the appeal which was given to the Secretary of State under paragraph (11) above.

(14) At any time the Secretary of State may extend the period, other than the period for giving notice of appeal under paragraph (6) above, within which a person is required or authorised by this regulation to do anything and this regulation shall have effect accordingly.

(15) Subject to the foregoing provisions of this regulation, the procedure to be followed in the course of an appeal, except in the course of the hearing before any appointed person of oral representations, shall be such as the Secretary of State may direct.

Information requirements

9.—(1) Information shall be given in relation to any electrical device of a kind approved by a specified person in accordance with these Regulations for the purpose of indicating that the device is of a kind so approved.

(2) The manner in which such information is to be given is that the device shall be legibly marked, or bear a label, with the words “Approved by” followed by the name and reference number of the person in question.

(3) Information shall be given in relation to any electrical device (other than a standard plug after 31st August 1988)—

- (a) in respect of which information is not required to be given under paragraph (1) above; but
- (b) which conforms to a particular British Standard specified for such a device in Schedule 3 to these Regulations,

for the purpose of indicating that the device conforms to that standard.

(4) The manner in which such information is to be given is that the device shall be legibly marked with such British Standard number or other indication as to identify the particular standard in question.

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

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

(7) Information shall not be given in connection with any electrical device by means of a misleading mark or otherwise which purports to indicate or might reasonably be mistaken for an indication that the device is of a kind approved by a particular person specified in Schedule 2 to these Regulations or conforms to a British Standard specified for such a device under these Regulations, when the device is not so approved or does not so conform to the standard, or when any approval has been cancelled.

Testing by enforcement authorities

10.—(1) Any test of any electrical device seized or purchased by or on behalf of an enforcement authority in pursuance of Schedule 2 to the Consumer Safety Act 1978 shall be carried out—

- (a) by such person as may be determined by the Secretary of State, in the manner specified in paragraph (2) below and at the expense of the authority; or
- (b) by the authority in that manner.

(2) The manner in which any such test is to be carried out is that the person concerned shall carry out a visual inspection of the electrical device and shall subject the device to any test described in a British Standard specified for such a device in Schedule 3 to these Regulations which in the opinion of that person is appropriate in the circumstances and to any other test that is necessary to ensure that the requirements of these Regulations have been observed.

(3) Where any such standard provides for the testing of more than one sample of a particular type of electrical device, for the purpose of this regulation only the electrical device in question need be tested.

27th March 1987

Michael Howard
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State,
Department of Trade and Industry

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SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 3

EXCEPTED ELECTRICAL DEVICES

1. Any plug, socket or adaptor which incorporates any other electrical device (other than a fuse link, switch or indicator light).
2. Any plug or socket forming part of a ceiling-rose connector (that is to say a connector designed to hold up overhead electric lighting fittings).
3. Any plug or socket forming part of a luminaire comprising a track system for electric lights and their fittings.
4. Any Europlug (that is to say a plug described in Standard Sheet XVI to Publication 7 of the International Commission on Rules for the Approval of Electrical Equipment (abbreviated to CEE) as modified by Modification 1 published August 1973) which is marked with or accompanied by a warning that it is not suitable for use in a UK mains socket and, when supplied already connected to any electrical equipment, where the equipment conforms to any standard that provides requirements for it including the use of a Europlug.
5. Any non-rewireable or any moulded-on Europlug (that is to say any such Europlug the manufacture of which is completed by insulating material moulded around pre-assembled component parts and the terminations of the flexible cable or cord) (whether or not so marked or accompanied) which is designed for the purpose of connecting to an electrical circuit any electrical shaver or toothbrush.
6. Any travel adaptor (that is to say an adaptor which enables a plug designed for use in the United Kingdom to be connected to a socket used outside the United Kingdom).

SCHEDULE 2

Regulations 2(1), 5 and 6

PERSONS SPECIFIED TO APPROVE KINDS OF ELECTRICAL DEVICES

ASTA Certification Services of Prudential Chambers, 23/24 Market Place, Rugby CV21 3D.
British Electrotechnical Approvals Board of Mark House, The Green, 9/11 Queen's Road, Hersham, Walton on Thames, Surrey KT12 5NA.

British Standards Institution of Quality Assurance Services, PO Box 375, Milton Keynes M14 6LO.

The Secretary of State.

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SCHEDULE 3

Regulations 2(1), 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10

SPECIFIED BRITISH STANDARDS

(1) Item No.	(2) Electrical devices	(3) British Standard
1	Standard plugs: sockets with which standard plugs may be engaged.	1363: 1984 published to come into effect on 31st August 1984(6).
2	Round-pin plugs; sockets and adaptors with which round-pin plugs may be engaged.	546: 1950 published on 16th March 1950(7) including Supplement No. 1 (1960) published on 30th December 1960.
3	2-Pin reversible plugs and shaver sockets.	4573: 1970 published on 19th March 1970(8).
4	Fuse links which are suitable for use in a standard plug.	1362: 1973 published on 28th February 1973(9).
5	Cartridge fuse-links (rated up to 5 amperes) which are suitable for use in a round-pin plug conforming to British Standard 546: 1950.	646: 1958 published on 31st January 1958.
6	Adaptors except those in item 2.	5733: 1979 published to come into effect on 30th April 1979(10).

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations apply to electric plugs, sockets and adaptors designed for domestic use at a voltage of not less than 50 volts and to fuse links suitable for use with such plugs and adaptors with the exception of certain electrical devices listed in Schedule 1. The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1975 cease to apply to such plugs, sockets, adaptors and fuse links. The Regulations do not apply to plugs or sockets constructed internally in appliances where the plug cannot be engaged

(6) ISBN 0 580 13556 X, as amended by Amendments No. 1 and 2 published on 30th April 1985 and 31st December 1985 respectively.

(7) Incorporating Amendment No. 1 issued 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 and 6 published on 31st August 1982 and 31st May 1986 respectively.

(8) SBN 580 05807 7, as amended by Amendment No. 1 published and effective from 31st October 1983.

(9) ISBN 0 580 07438 2, as amended by Amendment No. 1 published on 29th June 1984.

(10) ISBN 0 580 10739 6, as amended by Amendments No. 1 and 2 published on 31st July 1981 and 29th April 1983 respectively.

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with or disengaged from the socket without something first being done to the appliance which requires the use of tools or to the extent that it is not practicable to conform to a British Standard listed in Schedule 3 (regulation 3).

Standard three pin plugs are required after 1st September 1988 to be approved by a person specified in Schedule 2 (specified person) (regulation 5). Until then they must conform to British Standard 1363: 1984, or provide an equivalent level of safety. Other electrical devices specified in column 2 of Schedule 3 to these Regulations are required to conform to the appropriate British Standard or be so approved (regulation 6). Applications may be made for approval on payment of the prescribed fee. Approvals have to be given subject to a condition requiring the applicant to give notice of changes in the devices and may be altered or cancelled. Provision is made for an applicant for an approval to make representations to the specified person, where that person is minded to refuse an approval or to alter or cancel it, and for him to appeal to the Secretary of State if he is aggrieved by a decision of the specified person. The Regulations also make provision as to the persons by whom such appeals may be heard and other matters connected with such appeals (regulations 7 and 8).

Provision is also made for certain information to be given in relation to electrical devices to which the Regulations apply (regulation 9).

The Regulations prohibit persons from supplying, offering to supply, agreeing to supply, exposing for supply or possessing for supply any such electrical device which does not comply with any requirement of the Regulations (regulation 4).

Copies of the British Standards referred to in the Regulations, and of Publication 7 referred to in paragraph 4 of Schedule 1, may be obtained from any of the sales outlets operated by the British Standards Institution (BSI) or by post from the BSI at Linford Wood, Milton Keynes, MK14 6LE.