
STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

1999 No. 392

Explosives (Fireworks) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999

Citation and commencement

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Explosives (Fireworks) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 and subject to the provisions of paragraph 1(2) shall come into operation on 26th October 1999.

(2) Regulation 4(2) in so far as it relates to any mini-rocket or air bomb in category 2 shall come into operation on 1st February 2000.

Interpretation

2.—(1) In these Regulations—

“air bomb” means a Roman candle the functioning of which comprises only the ejection of any number of pyrotechnic units, the principal effect of which is any number of reports;

“another member state” means a member state other than the United Kingdom;

“assembly” means an assembly which includes any fireworks;

“aural effect” does not include any effect which is only incidental to a visual effect;

“banger” means a firework (other than an air bomb)—

- (a) which comprises a tube which contains black powder and has a fuse; and
- (b) the functioning of which principally involves a report;

“BS 7114” means the British Standard Specification comprising the following parts—

- (a) BS 7114: Part 1: 1988, the British Standard Specification for classification of fireworks published on 30th November 1988⁽¹⁾;
- (b) BS 7114: Part 2: 1988, the British Standard Specification for fireworks published on 30th November 1988⁽²⁾; and
- (c) BS 7114: Part 3: 1988, the British Standard Specification for methods of test for fireworks published on 30th November 1988⁽³⁾;

and references to Parts 1, 2 and 3 of BS 7114 shall be construed accordingly;

“category 1 firework” means a firework classified as category 1 under Part 1 of BS 7114 and includes an assembly so classified;

“category 2 firework” means a firework classified as category 2 under Part 1 of BS 7114 and includes any assembly so classified, and any reference to a particular firework or assembly being “in category 2” shall be construed accordingly;

“category 4 firework” means a firework classified as category 4 under Part 1 of BS 7114 and includes any assembly so classified, and any reference to a particular firework or assembly being “in category 4” shall be construed accordingly;

(1) ISBN 0 580 17026 8
(2) ISBN 0 580 17027 6
(3) ISBN 0 580 17028 4

“competent authority” means an authority in another member state recognised by the Secretary of State as competent to classify fireworks;

“enforcing authority” means an authority with a duty to enforce the General Product Safety Regulations 1994⁽⁴⁾ as defined by regulation 11(c) of those Regulations or an authority with a duty to enforce the Consumer Protection Act 1987⁽⁵⁾ as defined by section 27(1)(a) of that Act;

“firework” means a device intended for use as a form of entertainment which contains, or otherwise incorporates, explosive composition or pyrotechnic composition (or both), and which, upon functioning, burns or explodes (or both) to produce a visual or aural effect (or both);

“firework of erratic flight” means a firework the functioning of which involves it following a random trajectory or a random path along the ground, whether or not it functions within a pre-determined range;

“mini-rocket” means a firework, which is designed so that, on functioning, it propels itself into the air, and which comprises a tube—

- (a) the outside diameter of which, at the point where that diameter is greatest, is less than 12 millimetres;
- (b) which contains pyrotechnic composition or pyrotechnic units;
- (c) which is equipped with a stick or sticks for the purposes of stabilising its flight; and
- (d) the overall length of which (including the length of any stick or sticks) is no more than 300 millimetres;

“original package” means the package in which the fireworks were supplied for the purpose of retail sale by the manufacturer or importer;

“primary pack” means a package of fireworks of the same type, all of which are either category 1 fireworks or category 2 fireworks, which is intended to be offered for retail sale as a single unit;

“pyrotechnic composition” means a substance or a mixture of substances designed to produce an effect by heat, light, sound, gas or smoke or a combination of these as the result of non-detonative self-sustaining exothermic chemical reactions;

“selection pack” means a package of fireworks of more than one category or one type offered or intended to be offered for retail sale as a single unit;

“sparkler” means a firework comprising a rigid wire partially coated with slow burning pyrotechnic composition, the functioning of which involves the emission of sparks without a report;

“visual effect” does not include any effect which is only incidental to an aural effect.

Savings for Explosives Acts

3. Nothing in these Regulations shall affect or derogate from any provisions under the Explosives Act 1875⁽⁶⁾ or the Explosives Act (Northern Ireland) 1924⁽⁷⁾ whether by Order in Council, Rule or other Statutory Instrument.

(4) 1994 No. 2328

(5) 1987 c. 43

(6) 38 and 39 Vict. c. 17

(7) 14 and 15 Geo 5 (N.I.)

Part II

Prohibition on the possession, purchase, sale or use of fireworks

4.—(1) Subject to regulation 9, the possession, purchase or use of fireworks by a person other than a Government Inspector, Constable or representative of an enforcing authority acting in his capacity as such shall be prohibited except under licence issued by the Secretary of State.

(2) Subject to these Regulations the possession, purchase, sale or use of any firework of erratic flight or any mini-rocket or banger or air bomb in category 2 is prohibited.

(3) Subject to these Regulations the use of any firework outdoors after 11.00 pm and before 7.00 am is prohibited except under licence, other than on the 31st December 1999 or the 1st January 2000.

Exceptions for special effects purposes

5. Regulation 4(2) shall not prohibit the possession, purchase, sale, acquisition or handling of any firework of erratic flight or any mini-rocket or banger or air bomb in category 2 or assembly of them by or to any person for use, in the course of a trade or business of his, for special effects purposes in the theatre, on film or on television.

Licence for the possession, purchase or use of fireworks

6.—(1) An application for a licence under regulation 4(1) shall be made in writing to the Secretary of State and shall be accompanied by such information and in such form and be made in such time as the Secretary of State may require.

(2) A licence under regulation 4(1) shall be in such form and subject to such conditions bearing on health and safety as the Secretary of State may require.

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2), the conditions imposed under that paragraph may include conditions as to the persons who are present, on behalf of the applicant, when the fireworks are fired.

(4) The Secretary of State shall not issue a licence under regulation 4(1) unless she is satisfied that to do so would not put at risk the health and safety of any person.

Production of licence

7.—(1) The purchaser of fireworks acting under a licence issued under regulation 4(1) shall produce his licence to the seller at the time of purchase and the seller, where such licence is not so produced, shall be prohibited from selling such fireworks.

(2) The seller of fireworks subject to licence shall keep a permanent record of all sales of such fireworks. He shall record the name and address of every person to whom he sells such fireworks together with the date of each such sale and particulars of the quantity and type of the fireworks sold and the licence number.

(3) The record shall be retained for at least two years.

(4) The record shall on demand be immediately produced for inspection by a Government Inspector, Constable or representative of an enforcing authority on production of his warrant.

Sale in original package and additional labelling requirements

8.—(1) The sale or purchase of fireworks referred to in Schedule 1, other than in prepacked quantities of 10 or more in selection packs and 5 or more in primary packs in their original package, is prohibited.

(2) A person who carries on a retail business involving to whatever extent the sale of fireworks or assemblies, shall not sell nor transfer to any person, including persons within his employ, any firework which he has removed, caused to be removed or knows to have been removed from a primary pack or a selection pack containing fireworks referred to in Schedule 1.

(3) Where fireworks and assemblies in category 4 are sold or transferred in accordance with regulation 4(1) the packaging must be marked with the words—

“This device must not be sold to, or used by a member of the general public”.

(4) A person shall not sell or transfer any sparkler unless the packet in which it is contained is marked with the words “Warning: not to be given to children under 5 years of age”.

(5) A person shall not sell or transfer any firework which is not labelled in English.

Fireworks exempt from prohibition

9. Regulation 4(1) shall not apply to—

- (a) the fireworks in Schedule 1 or their equivalents classified by a competent authority in another member state; and
- (b) any person keeping classified fireworks in premises registered or in stores or magazines licenced under section 5 of the Explosives Act 1875 for the purpose of wholesale or retail trade;
- (c) “Classified” in this regulation has the meaning assigned to it by the Classification and Labelling of Explosives Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1991(8).

Licence fee

10. The fee payable to the Secretary of State for the processing of a licence under regulation 4(1) shall be such sum as is specified in Schedule 3.

Part III

Display of notice and certificate

(a) 11. (1) (a) A notice displaying the following statement—

“It is illegal to sell fireworks to anyone under the age of 16”

shall be exhibited at every premises at which fireworks are sold by retail and shall be so exhibited in a prominent position where it can be easily read by persons at the point of sale, and comprise characters in bold black colour against a white background;

(b) the dimensions of the notice to be exhibited in accordance with paragraph (a) shall be not less than 297 millimetres by 420 millimetres and the size of the statement to be displayed on the notice shall be such that no character is less than 36 millimetres high.

(2) The original certificate of registration of premises under section 5 of the Explosives Act 1875 shall be displayed prominently at the point of sale.

Transactions in fireworks

12. The provisions of section 1(1) and (2) of the Explosives Act (Northern Ireland) 1970 shall not apply to the fireworks in Schedule 2.

Offences

13. A person who contravenes regulations 4, 7, 8 or 11 or any condition of a licence issued by the Secretary of State under regulation 4(1), shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale.

Repeal

14. The Explosives (Fireworks) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997⁽⁹⁾ are hereby repealed.

Northern Ireland Office
17th September 1999

Adam Ingram
Minister of State