



COVID -19 – Equipment legally subject to Written Schemes, Statutory Inspections or Thorough Examinations

Following the Government’s recent announcement of measures designed to contain the outbreak of COVID-19, HSE is aware of concerns relating to the examination of equipment that is subject to statutory inspection time limits. The Health and Safety Executive enforces several pieces of legislation that contain requirements for time-bound statutory inspections, including the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000 and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.

Duty-holders have a legal responsibility to maintain work equipment and carry out thorough examinations, written schemes and Statutory Inspections. These legal duties exist to help manage the significant hazard that the failure of such equipment can pose, not complying with these duties can significantly increase the risk of harm to workers and members of the public. Under certain circumstances with the agreement of a suitable competent person, some legislation does allow thorough examinations/statutory inspections to be postponed to a later date. Even if such options are taken, it remains the duty-holders responsibility to ensure that the equipment is safe to use.

If engineering companies are suffering shortages in their own resources, they should consider focusing this resource/expertise on equipment in premises where the most vulnerable are located such as hospitals, care homes and infrastructure which is essential to the running of the country.

Engineers who are working on sites where there are restrictions arising from the risk of COVID-19 infection should comply with site rules and take into account the wider Public Health England advice regarding good hygiene practices and separation distances. Consideration needs to be given to protecting the engineers but also, where relevant, any vulnerable persons who may be affected by their work.

At the current time, HSE is not considering issuing exemptions or relaxation of these requirements, but we recognise this is a fluid situation and this position is constantly under review.