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New EU Directives (RoHS and WEEE)

What are these directives?

WEEE is EU directive 2002/96/EC of the European Parliament and Council on waste electrical and electronic equipment. The purpose of this directive is the prevention of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) and the recovery or disposing of this waste in an eco-friendly way. In addition it covers, the reuse, recycling and other forms of recovery of such wastes so as to reduce the disposal of waste.

RoHS is EU directive 2002/95/EC of the European Parliament and Council on the restriction of the use of certain Hazardous Substances. The directive bans Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE) being put on the market that contains more than the permitted levels of lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium and both polybrominated biphenyl (PBB) and polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) flame retardants from 1st July 2006

ROHS - What it means for our customers

At the present time manufacturers of "Monitoring and Control Equipment" are not included in the scope of the RoHS Regulations. All equipment produced by RTK Instruments Ltd is classed as "Monitoring and Control Equipment" and hence falls outside the scope of the regulations. However, RTK is committed to the long-term protection of the environment and human health and as such has been working towards being fully compliant to the Regulations despite the fact that it is not a legal requirement.

The latest update on this regulation is that manufacturers of "Monitoring and Control Equipment, Section 9" will need to comply by 2012. RTK is applying this latest guideline and it is expected that all stock and all manufacturing processes will be converted to full compliance by 2011.

WEEE- What it means for our customers

Despite the European Parliament agreeing a timetable for implementation, the UK government has been very slow in creating the necessary legal framework and hence the infrastructure and systems necessary to handle WEEE have not been put into place.

Because of these problems the date for implementation has twice been delayed.

Following initial guidance from the DTI it appears that all equipment manufactured by RTK is also outside the scope of the regulations as it is used on large scale industrial equipment or is part of a fixed installation. Notwithstanding the Government's poor management of these regulations and the confusion as to how and if these regulations should be adopted, at RTK we wish to do the "right" thing. So from 1st July 2006 RTK will provide a free of charge disposal service for any customer who wishes to return RTK manufactured equipment that has come to the end of its useful life.

Paul Hartley
Managing Director



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Further information

If any customer needs clarification on these directives and our interpretation then please contact the sales office. The following links may also be of use:

DTI website <http://www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability/weee/>
http://www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability/weee/RoHS_Regs_Draft_Guidance.pdf
<http://www.rohs.gov.uk/>

Directive wording http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2003/l_037/l_03720030213en00240038.pdf
European Commission
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/waste/weee_index.htm
Environment Agency
<http://www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/legislation/380525/473094/?lang=e>
<http://www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/legislation/380525/477158/?lang=e>

