

Lifting Equipment and the Law with regards to Manufacture, Supply, Use and Maintenance of Chain slings

Current Legislation

The initial placement on the market of lifting equipment is covered by the **Machinery Directive, which is enacted in the UK by the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations.**

With regard to the use of lifting equipment, the

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER 98),

Apply to all work equipment and are then augmented in respect of lifting equipment by

Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)

LOLER adds to the requirements of PUWER so both apply and they came into force on the 5/12/98.

Records of Conformity, Test and Examination etc

All equipment should have a "birth certificate" to show that, when it was first made available for use, it complied with the relevant requirements.

For new equipment for which the European Directives apply, this will be an EC Declaration of Conformity. It will often be supplemented with a report of thorough examination or a manufactures certificate, if called for by the standard being worked to, sometimes as a combined document. For older equipment it will only be a certificate of test and examination. The regulations require that throughout its life lifting equipment will be subjected to a thorough examination by a competent person and the results recorded.

Although LOLER permits some flexibility about how frequently this is done, the regulations require the competent person to state on the record the latest date by which the next examination must be made. Within the parameters allowed the competent person can shorten the length of time before the next examination to suit the service conditions, the date stated on the examination record is legally binding.

The certificate part of the document is NOT what is called a "Test certificate".

It is no longer a legal requirement to issue proof load test certificates for chain slings when supplied new and issued for the first time.

The law only requires that an EC Declaration of Conformity is issued for the sling, but does not require this to be passed on with the goods. If the user holds the ORIGINAL declaration for a new and unused item he may take it into service without further action provided the Declaration is less than 12 months old. In all other circumstances it must be examined by a competent person and a report of thorough examination issued before it can enter service. This document should have sufficient information about the machine (sling) to ensure complete traceability for all components including details of all components used to manufacture the machine (sling).

The Machinery Directive and implementing regulations require the equipment to be marked with the CE mark. In the case of chain slings this may be integral part of the chain tag which also conforms with the recommendations of the chain sling standard BS EN 818-4 1997 on which the standard for Winner Grade 10 is based).

Marking of the completed lifting sling

The completed sling will show the following particulars:

In general this will be marked on to a tag of an accepted format in the shape of a (5 pointed star grade 50 Stainless Steel) (8 pointed star grade 8) (10 pointed star grade 10) manufactured from a compatible material and fixed permanently to the lifting sling.

This tag will have the following information

- 1) Identification of the manufacturer (Name or Symbol or recognised mark).
- 2) Identification of material or grade i.e.10.
- 3) Nominal chain size and number of legs
- 4) Working load limit (WLL)
- 5) Serial number of the sling.
- 6) The CE mark

*Important note: Cold stamping of the master links should be avoided to eliminate stress cracking of the component.

Providing information for safe use

Manufacturers and suppliers must provide the purchaser or hirer with information on the care and safe use of the equipment. This information should warn of any foreseeable risks and practices to avoid.