



Changes to UK Traffic Sign Manufacturing Standards 2006

The New Year has brought several significant changes to the UK's Traffic Sign manufacturing standards plus the commencement of National Highway Sector Schemes (NHSS) 9a and 9b.

Standards introduction




All parts of BS 873 which conflict with BS EN 12899-1; 2001 were withdrawn on 31st December 2005. The UK had requested an extension to BS 873 but this was rejected by Europe. Temporary type signs will be covered by **BS 8442 Miscellaneous road traffic signs & devices** which is expected to be published Spring / Summer 2006. (Part 2 of BS 873 will be extended for temporary traffic signs until BS 8442 is published).

BS EN 12899-1; 2001 Fixed, vertical road traffic signs

From 1st January 2006, BS EN12899-1; 2001 became the UK's manufacturing standard for Fixed, vertical road traffic signs, using non-retroreflective and retroreflective glass bead technology only. This is the first stage of European harmonisation to standards for "permanent" traffic signs which will eventually lead to **CE** marking of traffic signs in approximately 2007/08, following the implementation of a revision to the 2001 standard.

There are a number of significant differences between BS 873; part 6; 1983 and BS EN 12899-1; 2001, which will affect all specifiers and traffic sign manufacturers. A National annex to the 2001 standard to assist the industry understand the new requirements is proposed but not yet available.

One of the most important changes for the industry is the new classification for retroreflective sheeting's. This reverses the UK's previous identification of Class 1 and Class 2 sheeting's as defined in BS 873; part 6; 1983. The new classifications are shown in the table below.

| Previous BS 873; part 6; 1983 Withdrawn 31/12/05 | BS EN12899-1; 2001 UK standard from 1 st January 2006 BS 8442 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Class 1 |  Class Ref 2 |
| Class 2 |  Class Ref 1 |
| Non-retroreflective |  NR 1 |

BS 8442 Miscellaneous road traffic signs & devices

This is a National Standard for temporary signs & certain other UK traffic devices that fall outside the scope of BS EN 12899-1, and it is expected to be published in Spring / Summer 2006.

Retroreflectivity classification will follow BS EN 12899-1; 2001, see table above. In the period until publication of BS 8442, there may be some confusion in the temporary sign market as to which class of retroreflectivity to specify, and it is suggested that the temporary sign industry adopts the new classifications from 1st January 2006.

BS 8408 Microprismatic retroreflective sheeting standard

BS 8408 was published in June 2005, and the scope states "for microprismatic retroreflective sheeting material for use in vertical road traffic signs". Microprismatic sheeting suppliers will make available the performance index results of their individual sheetings.



Introduction to National Highway Sector Schemes (NHSS)

NHSS are Highways Agency schemes for quality and management in Highway Works and certain schemes now affect organisations involved with traffic sign manufacture and/or undertaking installation of traffic signs. It should be noted that these schemes are mandatory for Highway Agency contracts and existing suppliers shall demonstrate compliance with the requirements of BS EN ISO 9001:2000 and the National Highway Sector Scheme document as part of their continuous improvement within BS EN ISO 9001:2000 registration. It is anticipated that other highway authorities that use the Specification for Highway Works as the basis of their own specifications requirements for procurement of Permanent and/or Temporary Road Traffic Signs will also require compliance with BS EN ISO 9001:2000 and the scheme document.

NHSS 9A

FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF PERMANENT AND / OR TEMPORARY ROAD TRAFFIC SIGNS.

NHSS 9a was published in January 2006 and should be available as a download document from www.ukas.com very soon. Organisations should register via approved certification bodies detailed in appendix F of the document. There are no grandfather rights within this scheme and operative N/SVQ assessment is required via a quite separate registration detailed in appendix C.

NHSS 9B

FOR THE INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF NON ILLUMINATED ROAD TRAFFIC SIGNS

NHSS 9B was published in September 2005, and organisations should have registered to this scheme by the 31st September 2005 deadline, to take advantage of operatives grandfather rights.

Organisations who require further information or who have not registered can do so via the Highways Electrical Academy website www.hea.uk.co

The NHSS 9b document is currently being revised along with NHSS 8 and 10 but is available in its draft format from the UKAS web site.

For further information and updates on any of the above subjects please contact ARTSM Traffic Signs Working Group (TSWG).

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