

All Interim Personnel and Company Certificates expire on 4 July 2011



Required now: From 4 July 2011 all interim Personnel and Company Certificates are no longer valid. It will be a legal requirement in Great Britain for all personnel to hold a full Personnel Certificate issued by a designated Certification Body if they install, maintain or service stationary refrigeration, air-conditioning or heat pump (RAC) equipment that contains or is designed to contain fluorinated greenhouse gases (F gases)¹ or if they perform F gas recovery or leak checking work. **Also by 4 July 2011** it is also a legal requirement for all businesses that install, maintain or service such systems to hold a full Company Certificate issued by a designated Certification Body.

It will be an offence to continue working with an interim Personnel or interim Company Certificate after 4 July 2011. If you or your business does not currently hold one of the full Personnel Certificates listed below or a full Company Certificate by 4 July 2011 you should apply for one urgently.

Who is affected?

- **Personnel** who undertake any of the following activities on stationary RAC systems that contain or are designed to contain F gases: leak checking, installation, maintenance, servicing or recovery.
- **Organisations** that directly employ engineers to install, maintain or service stationary RAC systems that contain or are designed to contain F gases. This includes maintenance contractors and installers, including sole traders, and RAC end users and facility managers that employ their own qualified staff to carry out these activities.

How do I comply?

Personnel Certification

After 4 July 2011 personnel wishing to undertake leak checking, installation, servicing and maintenance and or recovery on stationary RAC systems containing or designed to contain F gases need to hold a full qualification.

There are 4 different levels of certification which allow personnel to carry out different activities. The main ones are:

Category I certificate holders may carry out all of the following activities for any size of RAC systems containing F gases - leakage checking, refrigerant recovery, installation, maintenance and servicing. There are two Category I qualifications which are:

- 2079-11 City and Guilds Level 2 Award in F Gas and ODS Regulations: Category I
- Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) J11 Category I – leak checking, recovery, installation, service and maintenance of equipment

Category II certificate holders may carry out refrigerant recovery, installation, maintenance and servicing, in relation to RAC systems containing less than 3 kg of F gases (or less than 6 kg for systems that are hermetically sealed). Category II certificate holders may also carry out leak checks on any plant provided that it does not entail breaking into the refrigeration circuit containing F gases. There are two Category II qualifications which are:

- 2079-12 City and Guilds Level 2 Award in F Gas and ODS Regulations: Category II
- Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) J12 Category II – installation, service and maintenance of equipment with a charge of less than 3kg, (6kg if hermetically sealed) and leakage checking

Alternatively personnel may hold a full European qualification recognised under mutual recognition provisions.

¹ Common F gas refrigerants are HFCs such as R134a, R404A, R407C, R410A; a full list of F gases can be found at www.defra.gov.uk/fgas. Users of F gases are affected by the EC F gas Regulation as these refrigerants have a very high global warming potential that is up to 4,000 higher than CO₂.

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How do I comply?

Company Certification

To obtain a full Company Certificate you need to prove that:

- You employ personnel holding a full F gas Personnel Certificate issued by a Personnel Certification Body in a sufficient number to cover the expected volume and type of activities (or have an equivalent European qualification); and
- The necessary tools and procedures are available to the personnel engaged in activities for which certification is required.

Certificates are valid for 3 years from the date of issue and can be obtained from one of the 4 bodies listed below.

Training exemption

Trainees are exempt for up to 2 years, but they must work under the supervision of a person with an appropriate valid qualification and must be enrolled on a relevant training course.

Non-compliance: powers of enforcing authorities

Personnel who do not hold a full Personnel Certificate by 4 July 2011 and organisations who do not hold a full Company Certificate by 4 July 2011 will be committing a criminal offence. Personnel and organisations are urged to apply for their certificate as soon as possible to ensure they are certified by the 4 July 2011 deadline.

Your Local Authority or the Environment Agency will be the regulator for the F gas Regulations. A regulator has a range of options at its disposal to protect the environment and will use the option or options it believes will best ensure compliance with these Regulations, including prosecution.

Certification bodies and further information

Personnel Certification

The City and Guilds of London Institute and the Construction Industry Training Board are the designated personnel certification bodies.

City and Guilds: Tel: 020 7294 2800

Enter your postcode to find courses available in your area. Website: www.cityandguilds.com/24432.html?search_term=2079

Construction Skills (CITB): Tel: 0844 844 0046

Details of their courses are given at the following link. Website: www.cskills.org/uploads/gcspu041d-bes-refrigeration_tcm17-25247.pdf

Company Certification

Defra has designated four bodies that can issue a Company Certificate - Refcom, Quidos, Bureau Veritas and Stroma. To apply for a Company Certificate contact one of them:

Refcom: Website: www.refcom.org.uk, Tel: 01768 860409 Email: info@refcom.org.uk

Quidos: Website: www.fgasregister.com, Tel: 01225 318400 Email: fgas@quidos.co.uk

Bureau Veritas: Website: www.bureauveritas.co.uk/fgas, Tel: 020 7661 0726 Email: fgas.mail@uk.bureauveritas.com

Stroma: Website: www.stroma.com/cps/fgas, Tel: 0845 621 11 11 Email: fgas@stroma.com

For general queries related to the EC F Gas and Ozone Regulations contact:

F-Gas Support: Website: www.defra.gov.uk/fgas, Helpline: 0161 874 3663 Email: fgas-support@enviros.com