

ACRIB F GAS FACT SHEET 2



Contractor Obligations

The ACRIB (Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Industry Board) F Gas Implementation group brings together all of the key trade associations and professional bodies representing the sector to help communicate obligations and provide guidance on interpretation of the F Gas Regulations. Working with the F Gas Support service team ACRIB provides practical advice on the new F Gas Regulations which are now fully in place in GB legislation. A summary of some of the most frequently asked questions from the support help desk is shown below.

1. I employ engineers who work on RAC Systems containing F gases – who needs re-training?

You must use only qualified personnel for installation, commissioning, service or other refrigerant handling activities on stationary RAC systems that use HFC or HCFC refrigerants. The qualifications that are acceptable in the interim period - CITB J01 and C&G 2078 - do not meet the new minimum standards set out in Commission Regulation 303/2008, but these will be valid until July 2011 to work on RAC containing F gases. The only exception is for those working on equipment with a refrigerant charge of less than 3 kg where there may also be the option to hold an in-house qualification or to apply for an interim certificate based on previous experience

2. What are the new training courses and where can I find a training centre?

Qualifications from CITB and C&G that meet the minimum requirement of the Commission Regulation 303/2008 became available earlier this year - C&G 2079 and CITB J11-14. To remain working in the RAC sector on equipment containing F gases relevant personnel will need to gain one of these qualifications by July 2011.

The ACRIB website has a regularly updated list of F Gas training providers and shows the length and style of training available at www.acrib.org.uk.

3. I have heard that there is going to be a new Company certification scheme – where can I get this certificate?

Your company should be certificated by 5th July 2009. The details of this new scheme are available from www.defra.gov.uk/fgas. Government appointed three bodies as certification bodies. You can register your company for a basic interim certificate either on line or by filling out a simple application form.

4. How will the regulations affect the systems I am installing now?

- Article 10 of the EC Regulation No 1516/2007 requires that all newly installed equipment should be checked for leakage immediately after installation
- If you install stationary systems containing 300 kgs or more of F gas then they will need to be fitted with 'automatic leak detection systems'
- You should be aware that any new system placed on the market or fitted must be fitted with a label clearly stating the type and quantity of HFC refrigerant used.
- Regarding split systems, the method of installing can affect whether it can be labelled as hermetically sealed or not, which can determine obligations under the regulations for certain sized systems.
- All personnel doing installation work that relates to the refrigeration circuit (e.g. joining pipework, evacuation, charging, leak testing etc.) must have a suitable qualification.



5. Are there any changes to how I handle and store refrigerant containers ?

Any containers you use to fill equipment should be returned so that any remaining gas can be recovered and if appropriate they can be re-used. The use of non-refillable containers for transporting or storing F gas refrigerants is banned. Placing on the market of non-refillable containers used to service equipment is banned from July 2007, except for those already filled at that time.

6. What records do I need to keep?

As a refrigeration contracting business you must keep records of:

- Personnel qualifications & training
- Imports & exports outside EC
- Recovery of HCFCs that you intend to resell after 1st Jan 2010 (details are awaited on the format of these records)
- Records for any of your own in-house RAC systems

7. Don't I need to keep records of refrigerant used?

Under the EC F gas Regulation it is the responsibility of the operator to keep records of relevant information specifically identifying any stationary RAC equipment on site that contains 3 kg or more of HFC refrigerant. This includes separate records on each piece of equipment identifying work completed, by whom, when and why, detailing any results and follow up actions. The records must also specify quantities of refrigerant added/removed at the time along with details of what was done with recovered refrigerant. Many operators have previously relied on their contractors to do this for them, often resulting in the loss of information when contractors change. The obligation on operators to keep records will mean that information is not lost but kept on site or centrally by the operator.

8. Where can I get more information on all of this?

F Gas support published a range of free detailed guidance notes at www.defra.gov.uk/fgas. The following will be most helpful on these topics:

- RAC 3 - Key Obligations including definitions of hermetic systems, system records
- RAC 5 - Certification of personnel and companies
- RAC 6 - Practical Guidance and FAQs including labelling of new equipment you fit.