



**Statement from ICOM, FPS and OFTEC
on the forthcoming revision of BS 2869 to allow up to 7% biodiesel content
in gas oil primarily intended for use in non-road mobile machinery**

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ICOM Energy Association

ICOM Energy Association represents the interests of the UK Commercial and Industrial Boiler, Water Heater and Steam Raising Plant Manufacturers within the UK, Europe and internationally. With over 95% of UK commercial boiler manufacturers' sales through members, ICOM is well placed to inform the industry on key issues.

The Federation of Petroleum Suppliers

The Federation of Petroleum Suppliers Limited is the trade association for the oil distribution industry and ancillary interests in the UK and the Republic of Ireland. It provides members with a collective voice for the industry at national level, services to assist members in optimising their business efficiencies and promotes best practice in the industry.

OFTEC the Oil Firing technical Association Ltd is the Trade Association representing manufacturers of oil fired equipment such as oil boilers, cookers and storage tanks. OFTEC sets technical standards for installation and commissioning of oil fired equipment and administers a Competent Persons' Scheme for oil technicians with approximately 9,500 people on this register.

Background

Since the introduction of the European Biofuels Directive (2003/30/EC) in 2003, EU Member States have had an obligation to ensure that overall minimum levels of biofuels are used. In the UK, the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation was introduced to implement this and, as a result, much of the diesel fuel supplied for road use since 2008 has had up to 5% biodiesel, which was the maximum permitted.

The introduction of the European Renewable Energy Directive and the Fuels Quality Directive means that the proportion of biofuel for road transport use must increase over the coming years. To ensure that fuels available for road transport are fit for purpose, the EN 590 diesel standard was developed by CEN, the European Standards Committee.

Changes to BS EN 590 and BS 2869

BS EN 590:2009, the British Standard for road diesel, was revised in 2009 to increase the biodiesel in road diesel fuel to a maximum of 7%. In autumn 2010, the British Standard 2869 for Class A2 diesel (non road mobile fuel) will be revised to reflect this increased biodiesel content. The BS 2869 Class D gas oil specification is at the same time being aligned with the Class A2 specification and this is the fuel that will be supplied in most instances to stationary plant such as gas oil heating boilers.

ICOM, FPS and OFTEC and their members would like to advise all commercial and industrial consumers of Class D gas oil that there may be up to 7% biodiesel in Class D gas oil from mid 2010.

The previous editions of BS EN 590 and BS 2869 allowed the use of up to 5% biodiesel. However, for commercial reasons, suppliers of gas oil in the main did not supply product with any biodiesel.

In addition to the increase in biodiesel, there has also been a move to sulphur free fuel. As sulphur levels drop to very low levels, the viscosity of the fuel also drops; this drop in viscosity can have an effect on seals resulting in system leaks.

What does this mean for the end user?

Recent trials in Europe have shown that the addition of biodiesel over 5% in existing heating systems can cause filter blockage due to the biodiesel's cleaning sludge and debris from the original tank and pipe work. There also may be issues for system components such as seals, burner fuel pump bearings and other elements of the heating system due to biofuels being incompatible with materials.

Additional Information:

End users are encouraged to contact their service engineer and equipment manufacturer in order to assess any likely issues and make any necessary updates to their systems prior to taking class D gas oil with a percentage of biodiesel.

It is vitally important that oil storage and supply systems are routinely inspected and housekeeping maintained with regular checks both for leaks and to ensure that oil tanks remain water free.

For further information relating to the above, contact the appropriate organisation.

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