



Southern Africa Compressed Gases Association

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REGULATION UPDATE NO.1 – DECEMBER 2009

The Pressure Equipment Regulations (PER) were published in Government Gazette 32395 on 15th July 2009 as R734 and came into force on 1st October 2009. The Regulations replace under Section 43 of the Occupational Health & Safety Act, 1993 (Act No.85 of 1993) the Vessels under Pressure Regulations.

It is essential that all companies and their personnel are fully au fait with these Regulations and the accompanying SANS 347 Standard which forms an integral part of the new Regulations regarding Categorization & Conformity Assessment.

Registration as a Pipeline Gas Practitioner

Under the above new Regulations, the following are of importance to this position:

Regulation 1: (Def) "Authorised Person" means...

a person who is registered as competent within the scope of work for which an organisation (SAQCC Gas) approved by the chief inspector has registered that person

Regulation 17: Gas reticulation equipment and systems

(1) No person shall

- (a) handle, store or distribute any gas in any manner which includes the filling of a container, other than in accordance with the relevant health and safety standard incorporated into these Regulations under section 44 of the Act;
- (b) install or remove an appliance, pressure equipment or system for gas in any manner other than in accordance with the relevant safety standard incorporated into these Regulations under section 44 of the Act;
- (c) install or remove a gas appliance, or a gas system or a gas reticulation system, unless such person is an authorised person; or
- (d) use pressure equipment or systems for gas in a manner other than in accordance with the relevant safety standard incorporated into these regulations under section 44 of the Act.

(2) After installation or re-installation, and before commissioning a gas system, the user shall ensure that an external inspection and a leak test are performed by an authorised person or an approved inspection authority as applicable in terms of sub-regulation (1)(c).

(3) An authorised person or an approved inspection authority shall issue a certificate of conformity after completion of a gas installation, modification, alteration or change of user or ownership in the form of Annexure 1 in the PER.

The Southern Africa Compressed Gases Association via the South African Qualifications and Certifications Committee for Gas (SAQCC Gas) has a dispensation from the Department of Labour to become involved in the development and setting of standards, assessment and recommending qualified and competent gas practitioners in the medical and compressed gases industry.

Recommendations for the registration criteria have been set up in terms of this initiative and, in order to enable gas installations and associated work to continue, it is strongly recommended that all medical and compressed gases practitioners apply for registration immediately. Refer to the Definition of a Gas Practitioner below.

Definition of a Gas Practitioner

A Gas Practitioner is a person registered with the SACGA and authorised by the SAQCC Gas to conduct work in the Medical and Compressed Gases industry.

Practitioners can be registered in one or in a combination of the areas listed below in any of the competences stated in the application form: Design, Installation, Maintenance, Construction, Commissioning, Instrumentation and Inspection.

The application form should be completed as comprehensively as possible, in order for the SACGA to assess and recommend to the SAQCC Gas to issue such registration in accordance with the requirements of the Chief Inspector of the Department of Labour.

Blanket exemption will **NOT** be given to either gas supply industries, or installation companies and businesses in general or as a whole.

Criteria for Gas Practitioners will include, but not necessarily be restricted to:-

1. An acceptable standard of secondary education;
2. Tertiary or technical education with reference to the medical or compressed gas supply industry;
3. Present and past employment with an existing gas supply or system installation company;
4. In excess of 3 years proven experience in the industry;
5. Details and level of specific responsibility for actual installations;
6. A brief motivation from your present employer to support the application.

It would be expected that only those practitioners who are presently working in the industry and who substantially meet the necessary criteria above, will be issued with initial registration as authorised by the SAQCC Gas on behalf of the Department of Labour.

The Department of Labour has requested the Gas Industry to report unregistered gas practitioners and sub-standard installations. The industry needs to ensure competent practitioners including the safe installation and application of its equipment and product. Details of this procedure are given on our website www.sacga.za.org

Make sure you comply with all practitioner and equipment requirements within the statutory framework.

SAFETY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF US ALL