



Guidance note 2015.06.01: CE Marking of Road Traffic Signs covered under BS EN 12899

BS EN 12899; 2007 became mandatory on 1st July 2013 – so what does this mean to the sign maker and installer?

Basically it means that it will be unlawful to **place on the market i.e. not just install** any fixed, vertical road traffic signs, where conformity has not been demonstrated by way of a CE mark.

Which fixed vertical signs are applicable to CE marking under BS EN 12899-1; 2007?

Section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA) defines a traffic sign as “any object or device (whether fixed or portable) for conveying, to traffic on roads or any specified class of traffic, warnings, information, requirements, restrictions or prohibitions of any description –

- (a) Specified by regulations made by the Ministers acting jointly, or
- (b) Authorised by the Secretary of State

Paragraph (2) goes on to say that traffic signs shall be of the size, colour and type prescribed in regulations.

Any such device erected on a road is a traffic sign and is governed by section 64. Case law has established that any road to which the public has access, **including roads in car parks, motorway services, airports (landside but not airside) etc.** is a road for the purposes of RTRA.

BS EN 12899 applies to “Fixed, vertical road traffic signs”, so does not apply to portable signs. Other standards, e.g. 12966, apply to variable message signs (VMS) and other types of traffic sign not within the scope of BS EN 12899.

Interestingly, the scope of 12899 says the main intended use of fixed signs is for the instruction and guidance of road users “on public and private land”. This seems to go slightly wider than RTRA, and **arguably makes CE marking applicable to all such signs even if erected on roads to which the public does not have access.** The original mandate term we suspect was intended to apply to all fixed traffic signs wherever they were located.

Scope of BS EN 12899 states intended use of the sign is for the instruction and guidance of road users “on public and private land”. This implies demonstrating conformity by way of CE marking and is applicable to permanent traffic signs even if erected on roads to which the public does not have access. The following check list was drawn up with straight forward traffic signs in mind however, it would be prudent for sign makers and installers to consider this checklist very carefully.

Check List – have you included all the following in your order or specification?

- The sign is to comply with BS EN 12899:2007 and its National Annex
- From July 1st, 2013 that the sign is CE Marked
- For Highways Agency and adopted roads, the Sign Manufacturer must be certified to NHSS9A
- The overall dimensions of the sign face

- Preferably a drawing of the sign face, either in colour or clearly labelled to indicate colours. For a standard sign from The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions order (TSRGD) the diagram number, together with any optional text or other permitted variation required may be sufficient. Do not forget to specify if the sign should be reversed, for example, or the digits changed from that illustrated in the TRSGD
- The type of any electrical illumination needed
- The class of sign face material (indicating what grade of reflectivity is required)
- Any particular sign substrate to be used
- The number, type and length of posts required, whether they need to be passively safe and their finish
- The mounting height of the sign and spacing of the posts (information to correctly stiffen the sign face even if the posts are to be provided by others)
- The wind load class or pressure the sign needs to withstand

If you are specifying to EN 12899-1 fixed signs

Issues to be considered by purchaser when more than one supplier is used for a sign assembly

- Signs ordered direct from sign manufacturer
- Posts from depot stock
- Luminaires direct from luminaire manufacture
- **Comment:** If you are purchasing signs, posts, light units etc. from different manufacturers/suppliers, the purchaser i.e. you are then responsible for the CE compliance of the finished assembly and as such the sign would need to be CE marked. Unfortunately, this is not as cut and dried as it seems as if the various items are being ordered from stock, each item can be individually CE marked and comply with the standard but it is still the responsibility of the purchaser to ensure that when taken from stock the assembly is fit for purpose and hence has to CE mark the assembly

Product Manufacturers conformity requires:

- Sign face - requires post detail & wind loading
- Posts / supports - requires sign area etc.
- Luminaires & arms - Manufacturer declares conformity of unit for sign size and shape

If using sub-contractor, make sure they are aware of BS EN 12899!

Actions for sign manufacturer before placing product on the market

Below is a demonstration of CE marking that will need to be applied to the sign or supplied as accompanying documentation in order to conform with BS EN 12899-1 Fixed Signs.

The details on the label is only one example of the labelling which may be required as depending upon whether only the sign has been ordered or whether the whole assembly i.e. sign, posts, clips, illumination etc. have been ordered determines what information is required on the label. This details does not need to be on the reverse of the sign as they can be supplied as supporting documentation. In any event, the minimum labelling requirements for the sign are given in BS EN 12899 and should contain number & date of the European Standard, relevant performance class of the product i.e. RA1, RA/R2, R38-UK, the last two digits of the year of manufacture, name of the manufacturer and the batch/lot number.

 01234
AnyCo Ltd, PO Box 21, B-1050 07 01234-CPD-00234
EN 12899-1:2007 Retroreflective sign plates with external illumination for fixed vertical road traffic signs Resistance to horizontal loads - Fixings – Pass Wind action - WL2 Temporary deflection bending – TDB5 Dynamic snow load - DSL1 Point loads - PL2 Permanent deflection – Pass Partial action factor – PAF1 Visibility characteristics Daylight chromaticity & luminance factor–CR1 Coefficient of retroreflection – RA1 Mean illuminance – E3 Uniformity of illuminance – UE2 Durability Impact resistance of sign face material - pass Resistance to weathering (three year accelerated natural weathering test) - Pass Resistance to corrosion – Aluminium; SP1 Resistance to penetration of dust and water – IP56

Where a sign is installed on an existing post, the sign can be CE marked but clearly the post cannot.

The Purchaser is responsible for post being structurally suitable. The Purchaser advises sign manufacturer of post details & wind loading for designs, sign substrate / channels to structurally conform. In the majority of cases, the Purchaser will be the sign company buying the sign. If the sign company is making the sign, they will have to comply with all the requirements themselves.

All signs & devices that fall outside scope of EN 12899; 2007;

BS 8442 Miscellaneous road traffic signs & devices

This specifies requirements and tests for rigid and flexible portable signs, barriers, self-supporting portable signs, stop/go signs, school crossing patrol signs, flap signs, flat traffic delineators, pedestrian crossing and refuge beacons, internally illuminated posts, twin amber flashing light units, retro reflective self-righting bollards, and non-retro reflecting road studs.

BSGA Members William Smith of Barnard Castle www.williamsmith.co.uk are amongst those small number of road traffic sign suppliers who are already compliant with the incoming legislation. Anyone supplying signs that are not CE marked and compliant will in effect be breaking the law.

For further detail please contact BSI www.bsigroup.com for copies of BS EN 12899; 2007 or William Smith for further guidance.

BSGA Members are kept informed of the legislation and other requirements necessary to help keep them and their clients from falling foul of their obligations.

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