

2.4 GENERAL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

There are a number of documents that are necessary when supplying weighing instruments or placing them on the market. The list below identifies these documents and gives advice on retention and content. Unless specified the document can be kept centrally, i.e. a copy does not have to accompany the instrument.

Documentation

Type Approval Certificate

For prescribed weighing instruments that are used for a legally controlled purpose. The prescribed types are: non-automatic weighing instruments, beltweighers, gravimetric filling machines, in-motion rail weighbridges and discontinuous totalisers. The Type Approval Certificate (TAC) describes the weighing instrument and any peripheral equipment that may be connected to it. If initial verification by a Trading Standards Officer is required, the TSO is entitled to ask for a copy of the TAC. Where the TAC is issued in another EU Member State in a language other than English, the TSO can ask for a translation to be provided - this can be an unofficial translation. The TAC remains valid for weighing equipment in use even after it has expired as far as new instruments are concerned. It should be retained as long as the instrument is in service.

EC Declaration of Conformity (D of C)

The D of C is drawn up by the manufacturer, or in the case of instruments imported from outside the EU it can be drawn up by the importer. It certifies that the instrument complies with all relevant Directives and if compliance with the Directives has been achieved by following harmonised standards, it should list all of the relevant standards that have been used. It will identify the manufacturer, the model / type, and must be signed on behalf of the manufacturer / importer. The document is required to be retained for 10 years after the last instrument of that type has been put on the market.

Design Documentation (Technical File)

The design documentation should be held by the manufacturer or importer. It will include drawings, circuit diagrams, schematics, design calculations and any other relevant drawings / specifications needed for production and if necessary, type approval. It should be retained for as long as the D of C. Where testing has been performed during the design/ prototype production phases or has been performed to confirm compliance with Directives such as the Low Voltage Directive or EMC Directive, the test results / reports should form part of the Design Documentation. The documentation need not be stored in one place as a specific file but it must be available to be compiled into a **Technical File**, should an enforcement official or market surveillance authority require it. It may be kept in an electronic format rather than as a set of papers, but if it is kept in electronic format it should be securely backed up.

Verification Records

Companies that are accredited for “self-verification” (including re-verification) will be required under their accreditation to store the records, including the results of tests performed during verification, for assessment and monitoring by the organisation that accredited them. Records may be stored electronically. They should be retained for at least three years.

Service Instructions

These documents should be available to anyone authorised or permitted to carry out servicing. There is no legal obligation to make them available to anyone else but for instruments that are submitted for Type Approval the service instructions will normally form part of the documentation submitted in support of the application for approval. Many manufacturers now make them available on their websites.

User's instructions

These normally accompany the instrument when it is supplied to the end user, though where a number of instruments of the same type are supplied it may be sufficient to only supply one or two sets. Again, where Type Approval is required these instructions will normally be included in the submission documentation. There is no legal obligation to supply user's instructions for weighing machines as such, but where the machine is also covered by the Machinery Directive then users instructions in the official language(s) of the country of use are mandatory. Where there are no users instructions supplied, the manufacturer must accept responsibility for warranty even if the fault was caused by misuse, if that misuse was foreseeable.

Certificate of Conformance

Under the NAWI Directive and the MID, where verification is carried out by a Notified Body, the verifier must issue a Certificate of Conformity after the verification is completed. This Certificate should be retained by the manufacturer / submitter and must be made available to enforcement agencies and market surveillance authorities when requested.

Compatibility of Modules data sheets

Where a TAC allows the use of alternative modules, such as load cells, the manufacturer must complete a Compatibility of Modules data sheet before submitting the complete instrument for verification. The verifier is entitled to request a copy of the sheet before verifying the instrument. For serial production instruments, it is only necessary to complete one sheet for the range. The sheet should be retained as part of the design documentation / Technical File.

Labelling

There are certain pieces of information that should be included on any weighing instrument. Unless specified in the TAC, the information must be permanently and indelibly marked on the instrument.

Type Approval details

The information required here will be such things as Max, Min, e, TAC number and Class number, plus any other data specified in the TAC. For automatic weighing instruments this will include any operational parameters that could affect weighing performance, (e.g. operating speed, packs per minute, maximum throughput).

Manufacturers name or mark

This is mandatory for Type Approved instruments and must be sufficient to identify the manufacturer / importer. It is mandatory also under other Directives and should therefore be on all instruments whether type approved or not. A registered Trade Mark will be accepted as sufficient to identify the manufacturer.

Weighing Capacity

Non-automatic weighing instruments that are not type approved must be marked with the maximum weighing capacity (in the form Max) as well as the manufacturers name or mark.

Electrical Safety Information

For electrical / electronic instruments sufficient electrical safety information to allow connection to the appropriate power supply must be provided. This may be the maximum input voltage, earthing requirements or any other data necessary for the safe connection and operation of the instrument.

CE Mark

Any instrument that is placed on the market and is subject to one or more of the New Approach Directives (NAWI, EMC, Low Voltage, Machinery) must carry the CE mark indicating compliance with all relevant Directives. Some, but not all Directives require the CE mark to be accompanied by the last two digits of the year in which the CE mark was affixed. As a general rule, it is best to include this information even where it is not specifically required by a Directive.

“M” mark

Instruments which are controlled either by the NAWI Directive or the MID, are required to carry an “M” mark to indicate compliance with the Directives. For NAWI this is a black M on a green background – there is no defined specification for the M on instruments covered by MID, but it would seem sensible to use the same “M” mark as for NAWI.

“Not to be used for direct sales to the public”

This marking is mandatory on NAWI of less than 100kg weighing capacity which are intended for industrial use but are of a design similar to that of an instrument intended for retail transactions. The marking should appear close to the display.

