



South African Qualification and Certification Committee for the Fire Industry

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SAQCC Fire TALK

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The use of non-accredited pressure-test facilities by technicians was tabled at the latest meetings of both the SAQCC Fire and industry bodies, and representatives were requested to tackle the issue again with the Department of Labour and the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS).

Complaints with accompanying evidence were submitted to these government bodies and the industry representatives are now asking for action. Feedback was still received from organizations such as the Fire Fighting Equipment Traders Association (FFETA) and the Industrial Fire Technology Association (IFTA) that technicians were sending their clients' CO₂ extinguishers to non-accredited facilities to be pressure-tested. This is illegal and not in accordance with legal requirements.

Verify accredited inspection bodies

Technicians are urged to check whether the inspection body they are using, is accredited by SANAS and DOL. The easiest verification method is to make use of the SANAS website where all the accredited bodies are listed by town. The approved stamp of each body is also displayed thereby facilitating checking procedures when actually servicing CO₂ extinguishers by ensuring that units display only approved stamps. The SANAS website address is www.sanas.co.za and information should be searched for under Accredited Facilities, Inspection Bodies. All approved bodies are displayed on the website with a link to their approved schedule for the inspection of transportable refillable gas containers. Their unique stamp is displayed on their schedule.

SAQCC Fire would remind technicians that they are signing off service labels on CO₂ extinguishers, thereby declaring that the cylinder adheres to legal requirements. This would include declaring that the unit carries an approved stamp by an accredited facility. It is evident that industry role players are calling for action and technicians may find they are held responsible for illegal actions!



Technicians called to task by SAQCC

SAQCC Fire is currently investigating many complaints received from the industry regarding the alleged actions of technicians and this has led to disciplinary hearings being held.

Cases currently being investigated include complaints of applications being received from technicians for re-registration with a company whilst still registered with another, and the company being unaware that their technician has submitted such application and thus subsequently been de-registered.

SAQCC Fire agreed at their last meeting that the committee when receiving such applications, will immediately notify the prior employer that such a technician would be deregistered with immediate effect by the SAQCC Fire. Such a technician would then be registered under his new employer once his application is approved.

SAQCC takes disciplinary action

SAQCC Fire has been taking disciplinary action in accordance with its constitution in cases where technicians were found guilty of an offence. In a recent case, this led to a technician's registration being suspended for three months where after he was required to be re-assessed before SAQCC Fire would register him again.



SAQCC Fire would like to remind technicians that the purpose of the committee's disciplinary code is to ensure that strict, acceptable and legal procedures exist for any disciplinary investigation thereby ensuring that high standards and ethics are maintained in our industry.

News flash & notices!



Technicians should be registered for the year 2008/2009 by now. Technicians who have not registered are urged to take action as by not renewing their registration, they will be de-registered and the relevant company names forwarded to the SABS with the possible consequences of the Company having its permit suspended, as it no longer has SAQCC Fire registered technicians.

- ❖ Technicians are urged to check their registration details on the SAQCC website as statistics show that the website enjoys up to 10 000 hits per month. One of the main aims of the website is to list all registered technicians and SABS-approved companies so that prospective end-users can use the website for easy reference to such accredited services in their area.
- ❖ The SAQCC's AGM is scheduled for the 12th of June 2008. Technicians are urged to attend the meeting and to nominate candidates who can represent their interests.
- ❖ The SAQCC and industry bodies including FFETA and IFTA have ensured that the interests of the industry are represented to government by appointing an official government liaison officer.

About the SAQCC

- Attention is drawn to the fact that it is an offence to use service labels other than the company you are registered with. Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who contravenes this rule.
- The Constitution of SAQCC Fire may only be changed during the annual general meeting or an extraordinary general meeting. Notification of the proposed change is sent to every registered technician to enable them to attend the meeting and proxies are allowed which ensures each and every individual an opportunity to vote on the amendments.
- The Operations Manual can be changed at any time, but to maintain transparency, notification of proposed changes is sent in the same way as any change to the Constitution set out above.

TIPS

- **Complaints of illegal extinguishers being distributed in South Africa have reached SAQCC Fire and technicians are urged to check the SABS website for approved manufacturers of portable fire extinguishers as only SABS-approved extinguishers may be installed in buildings.**

