



**South African Qualification and
Certification Committee
for the Fire Industry**

Reg. No.: 99/1937/08 a Section 21 Company

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**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING
OF SAQCC (FIRE
TO APPROVE CHANGES TO PART 2 OF THE OPERATIONS MANUAL
HELD AT 2PM ON THURSDAY 14TH JUNE 2007
LARGE TRAINING ROOM ~ COROBRIK BUILDING ~ MEADOWDALE**

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and apologies were tabled as per the attendance register.

The following was approved – proposed Mr Breedt and seconded Mr Nunnerley and carried unanimously.

Page 47 – Operations Manual

Paragraph 5.3.8: Delete existing paragraph and insert the following:

A formerly registered competent person who has been out of the fire industry for a period of more than two (2) years shall, before being allowed to re-register as a competent person, undergo either an assessment at an SAQCC Fire approved training centre ~ or undergo a peer assessment as set out in 5.3.11 ~ or successfully complete a training course at an SAQCC Fire approved training centre.

Paragraph 5.3.9: Delete existing paragraph and insert the following:

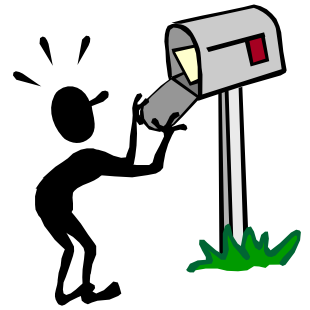
Any registered competent person who allows their registration to lapse for a period of 12 months or more – but not exceeding two years as detailed in 5.3.8 ~ will be required to re-register and produce a copy of their training certificate. If previously registered under the grandfather clause where no training certificate was required, before being allowed to re-register as a competent person they would need to undergo either an assessment at an SAQCC Fire approved training centre ~ or undergo a peer assessment as set out in 5.3.11 ~ or successfully complete a training course at an SAQCC Fire approved training centre.

Chairman

Dated

SAQCC Fire TALK

October 2007 Edition



The use of instruction labels without the SABS approval mark has been brought to the attention of SAQCC Fire by the SABS and various service companies. This issue was tabled at the June committee meeting and a working group was tasked to investigate possible solutions.

1475 companies printing own labels

SANS 1475 Part 1 requires that extinguishers be reconditioned so as to comply with the requirements of the original manufacturer. This means that if necessary, the instruction label must be replaced with the manufacturer's original label that carries that specific manufacturer's SABS approval mark as well as the correct information pertaining to that specific extinguisher such as tare and full mass. It was reported to SAQCC Fire that 1475 permit companies had complained they could often not identify extinguishers as cylinders were not clearly marked or these companies were unable to obtain the original manufacturer's label. This seems to have resulted in fire companies printing their own instruction labels using their own company name, but without the SABS approval mark.



Units become Illegal

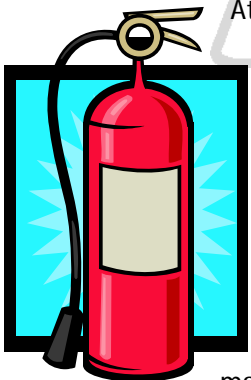
The use of such labels however results in the extinguisher becoming illegal, as it does not fulfil the requirement that portable fire extinguishers be SABS approved. It also means the service company would have to take complete ownership of the extinguisher should it malfunction.



Proposal for generic labels

At the August SAQCC Fire meeting, the Working Committee proposed that SANS 1475 be changed to allow for unidentifiable extinguishers to be pressure-tested and a generic SAQCC Fire instruction label to be affixed. The service company would then fill in all necessary data such as mass.

However, SAQCC Fire did not accept this resolution. Problems were foreseen with adherence to current legislation and the working committee were requested to discuss the matter with the SABS. The committee stated that it recognized the current dilemma facing service companies due to the history of the South African market where there were no proper control measures for correct identification of cylinders. SAQCC Fire decided that as the current legal requirement was only original manufacturers' labels with the SABS approval mark be used, service companies would be advised to adhere to the current requirement until further changes came about. The working committee assured SAQCC Fire in their report, that proposed changes to future legislation on the manufacturing of fire equipment and its traceability would be sufficient to ensure that service companies would then be able to comply with SANS 1475, Part 1.





SAQCC Fire appointed by DOL

The spokesman for the Department of Labour, Mr Pieter Loubsher, reiterated at the August SAQCC Fire meeting that SAQCC Fire was representing DOL as the department had appointed SAQCC Fire as the registering authority as required by the OSH Act and SANS 1475.

Mr Loubsher further informed the committee that it had an obligation to ensure all parties involved with registration at SAQCC Fire adhered to current legislation. Mr Loubsher said the committee must ensure that employers of technicians were registered for UIF and WCA. The committee requires this as part of the registration process to ensure that technicians were covered under the law when injured on duty.

There are currently 1035 technicians and 178 trainees registered with SAQCC Fire. 393 SABS approved companies employ these technicians.

Fixed gas system technicians to be registered



The current Act on Pressure Vessels is being revised. One of the proposed changes would be that the Chief Inspector of the Department of Labour might appoint a body to register competent persons. Discussions are taking place in the industry to ensure that the most suitable body would be appointed as the registering authority.

The DOL spokesman, Mr Pieter Loubsher, informed SAQCC Fire that this revision would require technicians installing and maintaining fixed gas fire systems to be registered with a registering authority appointed by DOL. He indicated that a body typically such as the SAQCC Fire would be appointed. The Fire Detection Installers Association (FDIA) became part of SAQCC Fire during 2007 when it obtained representation as a special body at the committee as per its constitution. The FDIA has since endeavoured to obtain confirmation from DOL that a legal body such as the SAQCC Fire registers technicians in the electronic fire industry. The chairman of the FDIA, Mr Keith Norgate, requested DOL to issue a letter confirming the appointment of this registering authority as soon as the revised act is promulgated. The revised act is expected to be passed towards the end of 2007.

Mr Norgate also said that as the Act would only stipulate the technicians of fixed gas fire systems be registered, the FDIA would request a body such as SAQCC Fire to offer voluntary registration for technicians in the electronic fire detection industry to enhance recognition of their skills and companies.

The FDIA has already circulated proposed categories for registration to its members. Five categories were proposed with different criteria for educational levels, industry training and practical experience. Mr Norgate said a grandfather clause would be proposed similar to that being used when the registration of portable fire extinguishing technicians was legislated.

News flash & notices!

**NEWS
FLASH!**

The SAQCC Technical committee chairman, Mr Jeremy Kellet requested SABS revisit the approval of the draft of SANS 1475, Part 2, pertaining to hose reels and hydrants as this matter had not been finalised. SAQCC Fire will inform technicians by sms as soon as this standard is finalised and printed.

- ❖ Although most registered technicians seemed to know that extinguishers must not be converted, reports have been received that this is still offered to some customers. Remember SANS 1475 states that an extinguisher of one medium may not be converted to an extinguisher of another medium. Should this be done, it would result in the extinguisher becoming illegal.



❖ Technicians are advised to consult with their local fire inspection authorities on the interpretation of legislation on safety signage supplied and installed in buildings as some local authorities seemed to be more strict than others on the application of the legal requirement that safety signage be approved in accordance with SANS 1186. Some local inspection authorities are also calling for all escape routes to be indicated by photoluminescent SABS approved signage.

- ❖ Technicians are reminded that although SANS 10019 requires that all CO2 cylinders must undergo high pressure testing every ten years, SANS 1475 Part 1 requires that all CO2 extinguishers manufactured prior to 2000 shall be tested at a five year interval by a SANAS approved test station. Thereafter the test intervals shall be ten years. Technicians should ensure when reconditioning CO2 extinguishers and it is due for testing, that only SANAS registered test stations be used. Information on accredited test stations can be found on the SANAS website at www.sanas.co.za. Look out for Inspection Bodies approved to do inspection of transportable refillable gas containers. The registration number of these bodies all start with IGS.



About the SAQCC



It is an offence to sign off service labels using the registration number of another registered person or to forge the signature of such a registered person. Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who contravenes this rule.

- A registered trainee may perform technical activities related to the reconditioning of fire extinguishers, but **ONLY** under the personal supervision of a registered competent person. This means a registered technician may not leave a trainee by himself at a site when busy with reconditioning of equipment.
- Technicians that need advice on any aspects related to the industry, are welcome to contact SAQCC Fire.



TIPS

Remember that aluminium CO₂ cylinders must never be re-coated with a paint process that involves heat eg powder coating. Heat has an effect on the molecular structure of aluminium, which creates a weakness and can result in failure of the cylinder walls.

- SANS 1475 requires that if an extinguisher is found to be more than 5% undercharge, it **shall not be topped up**, but shall be emptied and fully recharged.
- SANS 1475 requires that not more than 25% of extinguishers may be removed from a site. Such removal shall also be evenly distributed. It is also good practice to place at least one loan extinguisher for every two units removed from a site.
- An acceptable pressure control device must be used when pressurizing a stored pressure extinguisher. Contact SAQCC Fire for a data sheet issued by the Technical committee on what an acceptable pressure control device consists of.