Hoists and Slings and the law

EC Declaration of Conformity

Recently, our trainers have found occasions where a new hoist has been purchased or hired from a supplier, which were not accompanied by an EC Declaration of Conformity.

An EC Declaration of Conformity is a manufacturers (or their representative) formal document which states which product safety directive the equipment applies to that particular item of equipment. It provides an indication the equipment has been designed and constructed to comply with the relevant essential requirements and has undergone an appropriate conformity assessment process.

An EC Declaration of Conformity is not a quality or safety certificate. However, along with the appropriate CE marking, on the equipment, it can be presumed the equipment it refers to has no known defects.

Some equipment may be subject to more than one Directive, in this case a single EC Declaration of Conformity may be produced which states the Directives covered, or, alternatively, there may be separate Declarations of Conformity for each Directive.

What is contained in a Declaration of Conformity

A Declaration of Conformity must contain the following information:

- The name and address of the organisation taking responsibility for the product
- A description of the product
- List which product safety Directives it complies with
- It may include details of relevant standards used
- Signed and dated by a representative of the organisation placing it on the EU/EEA market.

With a few exceptions, a Declaration of Conformity must be passed down the supply chain to the end user. This also applies when they are hiring equipment.

In the case of lifting equipment an EC Declaration of Conformity may be used as a valid substitute for the initial examination, this will only apply for equipment that was not assembled on site. Should lifting equipment be assembled by the supplier at the end users establishment, then a LOLER certification must also be produced along with the Declaration of Conformity.

The Declaration of Conformity should accompany the equipment if it is sold or passed on. Should the equipment be used on another site a copy of the Declaration of Conformity should be present on that site.

Should you not be supplied with a Declaration of Conformity you should first contact your supplier, as you are entitled to hold a copy. Should you experience problems obtaining a Declaration of Conformity you should contact the Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/medicines-and-healthcare-products-regulatory-agency

In recent training visits our trainers have discovered that some hoists and slings have neither a Declaration of Conformity or LOLER certificate stating it has been inspected. The risk of exposure to prosecution under Health and Safety legislation is increased should a hoist related incident occur. The LOLER certificate should also be in the form of a sticker on the hoist and a tag on the slings identifying the date of the last hoist and sling inspection. This makes it easier for those using the slings and hoists to instantly identify that it is in date before they use it. Hoists and slings being used for people transfers should be inspected every **six months.**

For further information visit the Health & Safety Executive website:

http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/declaration-conformity.htm