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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**1983 No. 978**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**The Factories Act 1961 Etc. (Metrication) Regulations 1983**

<i>Made</i>	- - - -	<i>7th July 1983</i>
<i>Laid before Parliament</i>		<i>21st July 1983</i>
<i>Coming into Operation</i>		<i>12th August 1983</i>

The Secretary of State, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by sections 15(1) and (3)(a), 49 and 82(3)(a) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974<sup>(1)</sup> (“the 1974 Act”) and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf and for the purpose of giving effect without modifications to proposals submitted to him by the Health and Safety Commission under section 11(2)(d) of the 1974 Act after the carrying out by the said Commission of consultations in accordance with section 50(3) of that Act, hereby makes the following Regulations:—

**Citation and commencement**

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Factories Act 1961 etc. (Metrication) Regulations 1983 and shall come into operation on 12th August 1983.

**Amendment of section 19(1) of the Factories Act 1961 to alter standards of safety**

2. Section 19(1) of the Factories Act 1961<sup>(2)</sup> (which relates to self-acting machines) shall be amended by substituting for the measurement “eighteen inches” the measurement “500 millimetres”.

**Amendments to the Factories Act 1961 to substitute metric measurements for imperial measurements**

3.—(1) The provisions of the Factories Act 1961 specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations in column 1 shall be amended by substituting for the measurements set out opposite thereto in column 3 the measurements set out in the corresponding entry in column 4.

(2) In section 176(1) of the Factories Act 1961 the words “degrees” means degrees Fahrenheit” shall be omitted.

(3) For the First Schedule to the Factories Act 1961 there shall be substituted Schedule 2 to these Regulations.

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(1) Section 15 was amended by the Employment Protection Act 1975 (c.71), section 116 and Schedule 15, paragraph 6 and section 49 by that section and paragraph 15 of that Schedule.  
(2) The relevant amending instrument is S.I. 1974/1941.

### **Application to existing premises and plant or premises and plant under construction**

4.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this Regulation, where any premises or plant in existence or under construction immediately before the coming into operation of these Regulations complied with the Factories Act 1961 as then in force, then those premises or that plant shall be deemed to comply with that Act as amended by these Regulations.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this Regulation, sections 3(2), 68(4) and (8) of, and the First Schedule to, the Factories Act 1961 as amended by these Regulations shall apply in all relevant workrooms whether or not in existence or under construction immediately before the coming into operation of these Regulations, but nothing in this paragraph shall prevent the use of thermometers graduated in degrees Fahrenheit in workrooms under construction or in existence immediately before the coming into operation of these Regulations if such thermometers are provided with suitable conversion tables to convert their readings to degrees Celsius.

### **Amendments to the Abstract of Factories Act Order 1973**

5.—(1) The provisions of the Abstract of Factories Act Order 1973 specified in Schedule 3 to these Regulations in column 1 shall be amended by substituting for the measurements set out opposite thereto in column 3 the measurements set out in the corresponding entry in column 4.

(2) After paragraph 57 of Schedule 1 to the Abstract of Factories Act Order 1973 there shall be added the following paragraph—

58. *Metrication:* Where any premises or plant in existence or under construction immediately before the coming into operation of the Factories Act 1961 etc. (Metrication) Regulations 1983 complied with the Factories Act 1961 as then in force, then those premises or that plant shall be deemed to comply with that Act as amended by those Regulations except that section 3(2) of the Factories Act 1961 as likewise amended and which is referred to in paragraph 3 of this Schedule shall apply to all relevant workrooms whether or not in existence or under construction immediately before the coming into operation of these Regulations.

Signed by order of the Secretary of State.

7th July 1983

*John Selwyn Gummer*  
Joint Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Department of Employment

## SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 3(1)

## AMENDMENTS TO THE FACTORIES ACT 1961

<i>(1)</i> <i>Provision to be amended</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Subject-matter of measurement</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Present measurement</i>	<i>(4)</i> <i>Measurement to be substituted</i>
The Factories Act 1961			
Section 2(2)	Minimum amount of cubic space per person employed in a workroom	Four hundred cubic feet	11 cubic metres
Section 2(5)	Maximum height from floor to be taken into account when calculating cubic space	Fourteen feet	4.2 metres
Section 3(2)	Minimum temperature of workroom after the first hour	Sixty degrees	16 degrees Celsius
Section 18(1)	Minimum height of edge of fixed vessel, structure, sump or pit containing scalding, corrosive or poisonous liquid which need not be covered or fenced	Three feet	920 millimetres
	Minimum height of secure fencing to surround the vessel, structure, sump or pit etc.	Three feet	920 millimetres
Section 18(2)(a)	Minimum width of ladder, stair or gangway placed above, across or inside any vessel, structure, sump etc.	Eighteen inches	460 millimetres
Section 18(2)(b)	Minimum height of fencing on either side of ladder, stair or gangway	Three feet	920 millimetres
Section 18(3)	Passage between adjoining vessels etc to be barred unless there is		
	(a) minimum space between vessels or	Eighteen inches	460 millimetres
	(b) minimum height of secure fencing	Three feet	920 millimetres
Section 19(1)	Minimum distance between traversing carriage of any self-acting spinning mule and any part of the head stock of another such machine	Twelve inches	310 millimetres
Section 26(1)(f)	Maximum thickness of chains or slings to be annealed every six months	Half-inch	13 millimetres
Section 27(7)	Minimum distance between overhead travelling crane and person working on or near its wheel track	Twenty feet	6 metres

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<i>(1)</i> <i>Provision to be amended</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Subject-matter of measurement</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Present measurement</i>	<i>(4)</i> <i>Measurement to be substituted</i>
Section 29(2)	Distance which person will be liable to fall	Six feet six inches	2 metres
Section 30(2)	Minimum length of manhole (if rectangular or oval) in any chamber, tank, vat etc.	Eighteen inches	460 millimetres
	Minimum width of manhole (if rectangular or oval)	Sixteen inches	410 millimetres
	Minimum diameter of manhole (if circular)	Eighteen inches	460 millimetres
	Minimum length of manhole (if rectangular or oval) in any tank wagon and other mobile plant	Sixteen inches	410 millimetres
	Minimum width of manhole (if rectangular or oval)	Fourteen inches	360 millimetres
	Minimum diameter of manhole (if circular)	Sixteen inches	410 millimetres
Section 39(7)	Storage capacity of water-sealed gasholder	Five thousand cubic feet	140 cubic metres
Section 68(4)	Wet bulb temperature reading above which artificial humidification is prohibited	Seventy two and a half degrees	22.5 degrees Celsius
	Wet bulb temperature reading above which artificial humidification is prohibited when spinning cotton or spinning merino or cashmere by the French or dry process or spinning or combing wool by that process	Eighty degrees	26.5 degrees Celsius
Section 68(6)	Temperature of water absorbing oxygen from permanganate of potash solution	Sixty degrees	16 degrees Celsius
	Ratio of water to oxygen absorbed	Half a grain per gallon of water	7 milligrams per litre of water
Section 68(8)	Minimum difference in readings of the wet and dry bulb thermometers	Four degrees	2 degrees Celsius
Section 175(2)(n)	Storage capacity of gasholder	Five thousand cubic feet	140 cubic metres

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SCHEDULE 2

Regulation 3(3)

“FIRST SCHEDULE

Section 68

TABLE OF HUMIDITY

<i>I</i> <i>Dry Bulb Temperature</i> <i>Degrees Celsius</i>	<i>II</i> <i>Wet Bulb Temperature</i> <i>Degrees Celsius</i>
10	9
11	10
12	11
13	12
14	13
15	14
16	15
17	16
18	17
19	18
20	19
21	20
22	20.5
23	21
24	22
25	22.5
26	23.5
27	24
28	25
29	26
30	26.5”

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## SCHEDULE 3

Regulation 5(1)

## AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEDULES TO ABSTRACT OF FACTORIES ACT ORDER 1973

<i>(1)</i> <i>Provision to be amended</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Subject-matter of measurement</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Present measurement</i>	<i>(4)</i> <i>Measurement to be substituted</i>
The Abstract of Factories Act Order 1973			
Schedule 1			
Paragraph 2	Minimum amount of cubic space per person employed in a workroom	Four hundred cubic feet	11 cubic metres
	Maximum height from floor to be taken into account when calculating cubic space	Fourteen feet	4.2 metres
Paragraph 3	Minimum temperature of workroom after the first hour	60°F	16 degrees Celsius
Paragraph 17	Minimum height of edge of fixed vessel, structure, sump or pit containing scalding, corrosive or poisonous liquid which need not be covered or fenced	Three feet	920 millimetres
	Minimum width of ladder, stair or gangway placed above, across or inside any vessel, structure, sump etc.	18 inches	460 millimetres
	Minimum height of secure fencing to ladder, stair or gangway	Three feet	920 millimetres
	Passage between vessels etc to be barred unless there is		
	(a) minimum space between vessels or	18 inches	460 millimetres
	(b) minimum height of secure fencing	Three feet	920 millimetres
Paragraph 26	Minimum distance between over-head travelling crane and person working near its wheel track	20 feet	6 metres
Paragraph 28	Distance which person will be liable to fall	Six feet six inches	2 metres

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<i>(1)</i> <i>Provision to be amended</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Subject-matter of measurement</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Present measurement</i>	<i>(4)</i> <i>Measurement to be substituted</i>
Schedule 2			
Paragraph 13	Minimum distance between over-head travelling crane and person working near its wheel track	20 feet	6 metres

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

These Regulations amend the Factories Act 1961 (“the 1961 Act”) by substituting amounts or quantities expressed in metric units for amounts or quantities not so expressed. The substituted amounts preserve the effect of the original provisions except to the extent necessary to obtain amounts expressed in suitable and convenient terms, save that, by Regulation 2, section 19(1) of the Act (which relates to self-acting machines) is amended to improve standards of safety.

Regulation 4 provides that the amendments do not relate to premises or plant in existence or under construction immediately before the coming into operation of these Regulations if those premises or that plant complied with the then existing requirements, except that the amendments to sections 3(2) and 68(4) and (8) of and the First Schedule to the 1961 Act (which relate to the temperature and humidity of certain workrooms) shall apply to those workrooms whether or not in existence or under construction immediately before the coming into operation of these Regulations.

The Abstract of Factories Act Order 1973 which prescribes the abstract of the 1961 Act which must be posted in factories is also amended by substituting metric for non-metric units.