

1987 No. 1538

**WEIGHTS AND MEASURES**

**The Weights and Measures (Quantity Marking and Abbreviations of Units) Regulations 1987**

*Made* - - - - - *1st September 1987*  
*Laid before Parliament* *14th September 1987*  
*Coming into force* - *1st January 1988*

Whereas the Secretary of State pursuant to section 86(2) of the Weights and Measures Act 1985(a) has consulted such organisations as appear to him to be representative of interests substantially affected by these Regulations:

Now, therefore, the Secretary of State, in exercise of powers conferred on him by sections 15(1)(g), 23(1)(a), (d), 48(1)(a), (1A), 66, 68(1), (1A) (a), 86(1) and 94(1) of the Weights and Measures Act 1985 and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf, hereby makes the following Regulations:

**PART I**

**PRELIMINARY**

**Citation, commencement, revocation and interpretation**

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Weights and Measures (Quantity Marking and Abbreviations of Units) Regulations 1987 and shall come into force on 1st January 1988.

(2) The Weights and Measures (Marking of Goods and Abbreviations of Units) Regulations 1975(b), the Weights and Measures (Marking of Goods and Abbreviations of Units) (Amendment) Regulations 1977(c) and the Weights and Measures (Marking of Goods and Abbreviations of Units) (Amendment) Regulations 1980(d) are hereby revoked.

(3) In these Regulations, “the Act” means the Weights and Measures Act 1985.

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(a) 1985 c. 72; Section 68(1) defines “regulations”, Sections 48(1A) and 68 (1A) have effect by virtue of the modifications to Part V of the Act made by paragraphs 2(b) and 8(b) of Part II of Schedule 3 to the Weights and Measures (Packaged Goods) Regulations 1986 (S.I. 1986/2049) and Section 94(1) defines “prescribed”.

(b) S.I. 1975/1319.

(c) S.I. 1977/1683.

(d) S.I. 1980/8.

## PART II

### QUANTITY MARKING OF CONTAINERS AND UNITS OF MEASUREMENT TO BE USED IN MARKING

#### **Application**

2.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2) below, this Part of these Regulations shall apply in respect of—

- (a) the manner of the marking of any container required by or under Part IV of the Act or section 48(1) or (1A) or 68(1A) to be marked with information as to quantity; and
- (b) the units of measurement to be used in marking any container required by or under Part IV of the Act to be marked with information as to quantity by measurement.

(2) Regulations 5 and 6 shall not apply in relation to any catchweight product.

(3) In this regulation “catchweight product” means any product which is not pre-packed according to a pre-determined fixed weight pattern, but is pre-packed in varying quantities.

#### **Marking with quantity by measurement**

3.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2) below, the marking of any container with information as to quantity by measurement shall comprise the numerical value of the unit of measurement expressed in words or figures and a reference to that unit expressed either in words or by means of the relevant symbol or abbreviation which may lawfully be used for trade in relation to that unit under Part III of these Regulations.

(2) Where the numerical value of the unit of measurement is expressed in words, the reference to that unit shall be expressed in words and not by means of a symbol or abbreviation.

(3) Any marking with information as to quantity by gross weight shall include the word “gross” or the words “including container” or other words which indicate that the marked weight includes the weight of the container.

(4) No abbreviation of the word “net” or “gross” shall be used in the marking.

(5) Subject to paragraphs (6) and (7) below, a metric quantity used in the marking shall not be expressed as a vulgar fraction.

(6) For a period of 6 months after these Regulations come into force a metric quantity used in the marking may be expressed as one of the following vulgar fractions namely one half or  $\frac{1}{2}$ , or one quarter or  $\frac{1}{4}$ , of the unit of measurement.

(7) For a period of 1 year after these Regulations come into force a person shall not be guilty of an offence under section 25(2) of the Act by reason only of—

- (a) having in his possession for sale, or
- (b) having in his possession for delivery after sale, or
- (c) causing or suffering any other person to have in his possession for sale or for delivery after sale,

any goods pre-packed or otherwise made up in or on a container for sale, or for delivery after sale, where a metric quantity used in the marking is expressed as one of the said vulgar fractions.

#### **Legibility and position of marking**

4.—(1) Any marking of a container with information as to quantity—

- (a) shall be easy to understand, clearly legible and indelible;
- (b) shall be easily visible to an intending purchaser under normal conditions of purchase;
- (c) shall not in any way be hidden, obscured or interrupted by any other written or pictorial matter; and

- (d) if it is not on the actual container or on a label securely attached to the container, shall be so placed that it cannot be removed without opening the container.

(2) Where, pursuant to regulation 7(3) below, the words "metric pack" are included in any marking, those words shall appear within a surrounding line or on a panel which is clearly distinguished in colour from its surroundings and within which or on which there is no other written and no pictorial matter.

#### **Size of marking**

5.—(1) Subject to regulation 2(2) above, where in any marking of any container the quantity by number or the numerical value of a unit of measurement is expressed in figures, all the relevant figures shall be at least the height specified in the second column of the Table set out in Schedule 1 to these Regulations in relation to—

- (a) where the marking is of mass or weight, capacity or volume, the range of quantity specified in the first column of that Table, appropriate to the measurement being marked, within which the quantity of goods made up in or on that container falls, (or where the goods are made up in an imperial quantity, within which the metric equivalent of that quantity falls); or
- (b) where the marking is of area, length or number, the range of size of container so specified within which the size of the container in or on which the goods are made up falls, being a size calculated in accordance with the provisions of that Schedule.

(2) Where, pursuant to regulation 7(3) below, the words "metric pack" are included in any marking, those words shall appear in capital letters of at least the height referred to in paragraph (1) above.

(3) The numerator and denominator together indicating a vulgar fraction of a unit of measurement shall appear one on top of the other and for the purposes of paragraph (1) above shall be treated as a single figure.

#### **Imperial and metric units of measurement**

6.—(1) Subject to regulation 2(2) above and paragraph (2) below, the marking of any container with information as to quantity by measurement shall be in metric units of measurement but may, in addition, be in imperial units.

(2) In the case of any goods required by or under Part IV of the Act to be pre-packed or otherwise made up in or on a container for sale, or for delivery after sale, only if made up either in specified imperial or metric quantities or in specified imperial quantities only, the marking of quantity shall be in both metric and imperial units.

7.—(1) Where the marking of quantity is in both metric and imperial units of measurement, the following provisions of this regulation shall apply.

(2) The marking shall indicate the quantity in terms of the same measurement in the imperial system of units as in the metric system.

(3) In the case of any goods required by or under Part IV of the Act to be pre-packed or otherwise made up in or on a container for sale, or for delivery after sale, only if made up in specified quantities, the marking shall—

- (a) first indicate the quantity in which they are made up; and
- (b) if the quantity in which they are made up is in metric units, include the words "metric pack".

(4) In any other case the marking may indicate the quantity first in either imperial or metric units.

(5) The indications of quantity in imperial and metric units shall be of equal size and shall be distinct but in close proximity to each other and nothing shall be inserted between them.

(6) Notwithstanding anything in regulation 10 of the Weights and Measures

(Packaged Goods) Regulations 1986(a), in the case of cows' milk and goats' milk any marking of any quantity in imperial units shall be entirely in terms of the pint, quart or gallon.

(7) In paragraph (6) above, "cows' milk" means cows' milk in any liquid form other than that of condensed milk within the meaning of the Condensed Milk and Dried Milk Regulations 1977(b) (including evaporated milk) or of cream.

#### **Units of measurement to be used in marking**

8. Subject to regulation 7(6) above, the units of measurement to be used in marking any container with information as to quantity by measurement are those set out in Columns 2 and 3 of Schedule 2 to these Regulations, appropriate to the measurement being marked set out in Column 1.

#### **Amendment of the Weights and Measures (Packaged Goods) Regulations 1986**

9.—(1) Regulation 10 of the Weights and Measures (Packaged Goods) Regulations 1986 shall be amended as follows:—

(a) subject to paragraph (2) below, in paragraph (1)–

(i) for "Paragraphs (2) to (7) of this Regulation have" there shall be substituted "This regulation has"; and

(ii) the words "and the manner in which the statement is to be marked" shall be deleted;

(b) in paragraph (2)(a) for "the Weights and Measures (Marking of Goods and Abbreviations of Units) Regulations 1975" there shall be substituted "the Weights and Measures (Quantity Marking and Abbreviations of Units) Regulations 1987"; and

(c) subject to paragraph (2) below, paragraphs (7) and (8) shall be deleted.

(2) In the case of packages containing poultry, but not including part only of any poultry:

(a) paragraph (1)(c) above shall not apply; and

(b) for paragraph 1(B)(c)(ii) of Part I of Schedule 3 to the Weights and Measures (Packaged Goods) Regulations 1986 there shall be substituted "for Regulation 10(7) there were substituted the words "In the case of packages other than packages marked with the EEC mark the principal Regulations shall apply as if Regulations 3(3) and (4), 5 and 7(3) to (7) and Schedule 1 were omitted and as if in Regulation 6(1) for the words "metric units" onwards there were substituted "imperial or metric units or in both imperial and metric units" ".

### **PART III**

#### **USE FOR TRADE OF ABBREVIATIONS OF, OR SYMBOLS FOR, UNITS OF MEASUREMENT**

10. This Part of these Regulations shall apply as respects the use for trade (other than for the purpose of marking weighing or measuring equipment) of abbreviations of, or symbols for, units of measurement.

11.—(1) Only those symbols or abbreviations set out in Column 2 of Schedule 3 to these Regulations may be used for trade to indicate the relevant unit of measurement set out in Column 1 of that Schedule.

(2) In the case only of an abbreviation of an imperial unit so set out, the letter 's' may be added to it, when appropriate, to indicate the plural.

1st September 1987

*Francis Maude*  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State,  
Department of Trade and Industry

(a) S.I. 1986/2049.

(b) S.I. 1977/928, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 5

TABLE OF SIZE OF FIGURES IN QUANTITY MARKING OF CONTAINERS

1 <i>Mass or weight of goods</i>	2 <i>Minimum height of figures</i>
Not exceeding 50 g	2 mm
Exceeding 50 g but not exceeding 200 g	3 mm
Exceeding 200 g but not exceeding 1 kg	4 mm
Exceeding 1 kg	6 mm
<i>Capacity of goods</i>	
Not exceeding 5 cl	2 mm
Exceeding 5 cl but not exceeding 20 cl	3 mm
Exceeding 20 cl but not exceeding 1 L	4 mm
Exceeding 1 L	6 mm
<i>Volume of goods</i>	
Not exceeding 200 cm <sup>3</sup>	3 mm
Exceeding 200 cm <sup>3</sup> but not exceeding 1000 cm <sup>3</sup>	4 mm
Exceeding 1000 cm <sup>3</sup>	6 mm
Not exceeding 5 cl	2 mm
Exceeding 5 cl but not exceeding 20 cl	3 mm
Exceeding 20 cl but not exceeding 1 L	4 mm
Exceeding 1 L	6 mm
<i>Area, length and number</i>	
<i>Size of container</i>	
Not exceeding 12 cm	2 mm
Exceeding 12 cm but not exceeding 30 cm	3 mm
Exceeding 30 cm but not exceeding 45 cm	4 mm
Exceeding 45 cm	6 mm

For the purposes of this Schedule, the size of a container shall be treated as equal-

- (a) in the case of a rectilinear or approximately rectilinear container, to its height, length or width whichever is the greatest;
- (b) in the case of a container with curvilinear or approximately curvilinear cross section, its height or maximum diameter, whichever is the greater.

SCHEDULE 2

Regulation 8

UNITS OF MEASUREMENT TO BE USED IN QUANTITY MARKING

1 <i>Measurement</i>	2 <i>Metric unit</i>	3 <i>Imperial unit</i>
Length	metre centimetre millimetre	yard foot inch
Area	square metre square decimetre square centimetre	square yard square foot
Volume	cubic metre cubic centimetre litre centilitre millilitre	
Capacity	litre centilitre millilitre	gallon quart pint fluid ounce
Mass or weight	kilogram gram	pound ounce

SCHEDULE 3

Regulation 11

SYMBOLS FOR AND ABBREVIATIONS OF UNITS OF MEASUREMENT WHICH  
MAY BE USED FOR TRADE

PART I

METRIC UNITS

1 <i>Unit of measurement</i>	2 <i>Symbol</i>
metre	m
centimetre	cm
millimetre	mm
square metre	m <sup>2</sup>
square decimetre	dm <sup>2</sup>
square centimetre	cm <sup>2</sup>
cubic metre	m <sup>3</sup>
cubic centimetre	cm <sup>3</sup>
litre	l or L
decilitre	dl or dL
centilitre	cl or cL
millilitre	ml or mL
tonne	t
kilogram	kg
hectogram	hg
gram	g
milligram	mg

PART II  
IMPERIAL UNITS

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1	2
<i>Unit of measurement</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>
yard	yd
foot	ft
inch	in
square yard	sq yd
square foot	sq ft
gallon	gal
quart	qt
pint	pt
fluid ounce	fl oz
pound	lb
ounce	oz

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations consolidate with amendments the Weights and Measures (Marking of Goods and Abbreviations of Units) Regulations 1975, as amended. Part II makes provision as to the manner in which quantities are to be marked on those containers of goods which are required to be marked under the Weights and Measures Act 1985 with information as to quantity. They also make provision for the units of measurement to be used in marking the containers required to be marked under Part IV of the Act. Part III makes provision with respect to the abbreviations of (or symbols for) units of measurement which may lawfully be used for trade, other than for the purpose of marking weighing or measuring equipment.

A number of detailed provisions in the 1975 Regulations have been omitted as to the manner of quantity marking having regard to the provisions for legibility and position of marking which has to be easy to understand, clearly legible and indelible and easily visible under normal conditions of purchase. Detailed restrictions on the use of fractions of imperial and metric units of measurement have also been omitted.

The separate provisions in regulation 10(7) and (8) of the Weights and Measures (Packaged Goods) Regulations 1986, which prescribed the manner in which quantity marking statements are marked on packages sold by weight or volume under the system commonly known as "the average system", are now replaced by these Regulations. Consequential amendments to certain other provisions of regulation 10 of the 1986 Regulations are also made.