



Occupational Health & Safety Authority



## Media Release

# Lifting Platforms

The Occupational Health and Safety Authority (OHSA) and the Malta Standards Authority (MSA) would like to clarify the present situation with regards to Lifting Platforms installed and still being installed at several places of work.

The borderline between the Lifts Directive (implemented in Malta by virtue of LN 370 of 2002) and the Machinery Directive (implemented in Malta by virtue of LN 369 of 2002) is not fully clear, which is why the draft revised Machinery Directive (COM(2000) 899) at present in its last stages before the European Council and Parliament includes amendments to both Directives in this respect. The revision is expected to be adopted soon and hence, any lifts with a speed of less than 0.15 m/s will be excluded from the scope of the Lifts Directive and thus clearly covered by the Machinery Directive. At the same time, new essential safety requirements have been introduced into parts 4 and 6 of Annex I to the revised Machinery Directive to deal with specific risks associated with lifting machinery serving fixed landings.

Until these amendments are adopted and applicable, the OHSA and MSA wish to highlight the potentially hazardous nature of lifting platforms, and to provide guidance with regards to the interpretation of the current legislation in force.

In the first instance, both Authorities have agreed to accept that platforms for lifting persons that do not require a fully enclosed car to ensure the safety of the persons on the carrier (because of their slow speed and other protective features such as hold-to-run controls) may be placed on the market under the Machinery Directive. However, this does not mean that a manufacturer/installer can simply fit an open car to a lift to avoid applying the Lifts Directive in cases where an enclosed car is necessary for safety.

Furthermore, the use of such Lifting Platforms is strictly intended for “persons with impaired mobility” which prEN 81-41:2004 clearly defines as “difficulty in using stairs because of physical impairment”. Thus, for such existing Lifting Platforms, and until the new regulations on Inspection of Lifts, Machinery and Pressure Systems Regulations, 2005 (currently at “public consultation” stage) come into force, LN 47 of 1964: Factories

(Hoists and Lifts) Regulations 1964 shall continue to apply for those lifting platforms the direction of movement of which is restricted by guides, including the prescribed 6-monthly inspections.

In the case of lifting platforms the movement of which is not restricted by guides, it remains in the interests of an owner to ensure their safety, as well as an obligation in terms of the OHS Authority Act, 2000, (Cap. 424).

As for newly installed Lifting Platforms, these shall be:

- ❖ only installed where they are intended for persons with impaired mobility and not for the general public; and
- ❖ CE marked under Directive 98/37/EC, accompanied by the manufacturer's Declaration of Conformity and preferably in line with prEN 81-41:2004.

With both conditions being satisfied, then subsequent 6-monthly inspections, irrespective of whether the movement is restricted by a guide or not, shall be a legal requirement.

This decision is applicable with immediate effect and any queries are to be referred to the technical persons within either Authority, i.e. Ing. Vince Attard at: [vincent.attard@gov.mt](mailto:vincent.attard@gov.mt) or phone: 2124 7677 and/or Ing. Anthony Camilleri at: [anthony.camilleri@msa.org.mt](mailto:anthony.camilleri@msa.org.mt) or phone: 2125 5545.