

# F-Gas Support

Promoting Compliance with F-Gas and Ozone Regulations

## What is F-Gas Support?

F-Gas Support is a Government funded team set up to help organisations understand their obligations under the EU Fluorinated greenhouse gases (F gases) and Ozone Regulations. F-Gas Support will also be helping Regulators promote compliance with these important environmental Regulations. F-Gas Support is being run on behalf of Defra and the devolved administrations with full coverage across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the marine area (as defined in the F gas Regulations).

## What are F Gases?

F gases are a family of chemicals that contain fluorine. Most F gases are very powerful greenhouse gases which contribute to global warming if emitted to the atmosphere. The relevant F gases being regulated are:

<b>HFCs</b>	Hydrofluorocarbons	Common uses: refrigerants in refrigeration, air-conditioning and heat pumps used in many applications such as industry, offices, retail, hospitality and cars. <u>Other uses:</u> aerosols, insulating foam, solvents and fire protection
<b>PFCs</b>	Perfluorocarbons	Used in semi-conductor manufacture and a few other specialised applications.
<b>SF<sub>6</sub></b>	Sulphur hexafluoride	Used in high voltage switch gear, for magnesium smelting processes and a few other specialised applications.

## What are ozone-depleting substances (ODS)?

ODS are chemicals that can damage the Earth's ozone layer if they escape into the upper atmosphere. The ozone layer protects all living things from harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun. ODS include HCFCs (hydrofluorocarbons) which are still used widely as refrigerants in building air-conditioning and in industrial and commercial refrigeration.

## Which Regulations are applicable?

F-Gas Support will help promote compliance with two important EU Regulations:

- EC Regulation 842/2006 on certain fluorinated greenhouse gases (the F gas Regulation), which aims to reduce emissions of HFCs, PFCs and SF<sub>6</sub> and whose key obligations came into force in July 2007.
- EC Regulation 2037/2000 on substances that deplete the ozone layer (the Ozone Regulation), which phases out and controls remaining uses of ODS and has been in force since 2000. HCFCs are the main type of substance still to be phased out under this Regulation.

The obligations in these Regulations are fleshed out by a number of European Commission Regulations that provide extra detail and introduce minimum requirements which must be complied with. In addition to this the Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases Regulations 2008 prescribe offences and penalties applicable in Great Britain to infringements of the EU F gas Regulation.

## Who is affected by these Regulations?

Many commercial, industrial and public sector organisations will have obligations under the F gas and/or the Ozone Regulations.

**End users** of F gases and ODS have a number of obligations related to containment, gas recovery and record keeping. There are a large number of organisations that use F gases and they must all ensure they are complying with the Regulations.

**Contractors** working with F gases and ODS have obligations related to the use of suitably qualified staff and provision of appropriate equipment. Contractors in refrigeration, air-conditioning and fire protection will also need to obtain a certificate to allow them to work with F gases.

**Equipment manufacturers and distributors** have obligations related to equipment labelling and must ensure they adhere to the applicable F gas and ODS product bans. They can help end users by selling equipment that has very low leakage rates.

**F Gas Bans** will apply in a number of markets including the use of HFCs in certain types of aerosol, the use of SF<sub>6</sub> in magnesium smelting and the use of non-refillable F gas containers. HCFC refrigerants will be phased out between 2010 and 2015.

## Who is responsible for regulation?

For industrial facilities with environmental or IPPC/PPC permits regulated by the Environment Agency, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency or the Northern Ireland Environment and Heritage Service, those national bodies will be the regulators for the F gas and Ozone Regulations.

Councils will be the regulators for other industrial sites, and for all commercial and retail businesses.

The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) will be the regulator for the offshore oil and gas installations.

## What will F-Gas Support be doing to help with compliance?

F-Gas Support will be working proactively with affected organisations to provide information and guidance. F-Gas Support will help explain the obligations and provide practical advice about compliance. Information will be available from various sources including a Telephone Help Line and a dedicated F-Gas Support web site.

## What should you do next?

You need to assess whether your organisation is affected by the F gas and Ozone Regulations and, if you are affected, you must comply with your legal obligations. A visit to the F-Gas Support web site will help you identify your obligations. It is suggested that a Director of your organisation should be made responsible for compliance with the Regulations.

If you register your organisation with F-Gas Support we can ensure that you receive help and advice regarding your legal obligations and how to achieve compliance.

### How to contact F-Gas Support:

Website	<a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/fgas">www.defra.gov.uk/fgas</a>
Telephone Help Line	0161 874 3663
Email:	<a href="mailto:fgas-support@enviros.com">fgas-support@enviros.com</a>