

R&D Technical Guide: WEEE Directive

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1) WEEE directive 2012/19/EU

Waste of electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) such as computers, TV-sets, fridges and cell phones is one the fastest growing waste streams in the EU and is expected to grow to more than 12 million tonnes by 2020.

WEEE is a complex mixture of materials and components that because of their hazardous content, and if not properly managed, can cause major environmental and health problems. Moreover, the production of modern electronics requires the use of scarce and expensive resources. To improve the environmental management of WEEE and to contribute to a circular economy and enhance resource efficiency the improvement of collection, treatment and recycling of electronics at the end of their life is essential.

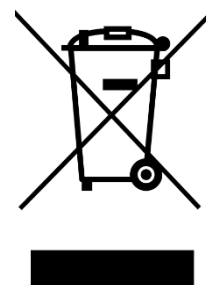


Figure 1 WEEE symbol

To address these problems two pieces of legislation have been put in place: The Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE Directive) and the Directive on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS Directive).

The first WEEE Directive (Directive 2002/96/EC) entered into force in February 2003. In December 2008, the European Commission proposed to revise the Directive in order to tackle the fast increasing waste stream. The new WEEE Directive 2012/19/EU entered into force on 13 August 2012 and became effective on 14 February 2014.

EU legislation restricting the use of hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS Directive 2002/95/EC) entered into force in February 2003. The legislation requires heavy metals such as lead, mercury, cadmium, and hexavalent chromium and flame retardants such as polybrominated biphenyls (PBB) or polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE) to be substituted by safer alternatives. In December 2008, the European Commission proposed to revise the Directive. The RoHS recast Directive 2011/65/EU became effective on 3 January 2013.¹

¹Adapted from 'http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/index_en.htm'; accessed 08/08/2018

2) Scope of the directive

Article 2 of Directive 2012/19/EU (waste electrical and electronic equipment - WEEE) lists the scope of this directive as follows:

1. This Directive shall apply to electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) as follows:

(a) from 13 August 2012 to 14 August 2018 (transitional period), subject to paragraph 3, to EEE falling within the categories set out in Annex I. Annex II contains an indicative list of EEE which falls within the categories set out in Annex I;

(b) from 15 August 2018, subject to paragraphs 3 and 4, to all EEE. All EEE shall be classified within the categories set out in Annex III. Annex IV contains a non-exhaustive list of EEE which falls within the categories set out in Annex III (open scope).

2. This Directive shall apply without prejudice to the requirements of Union legislation on safety and health, on chemicals, in particular Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency (3), as well as of specific Union waste management or product design legislation.

3. This Directive shall not apply to any of the following EEE:

(a) equipment which is necessary for the protection of the essential interests of the security of Member States, including arms, munitions and war material intended for specifically military purposes; L 197/42 Official Journal of the European Union 24.7.2012 EN (1) OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 13. (2) OJ C 369, 17.12.2011, p. 14. (3) OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

(b) equipment which is specifically designed and installed as part of another type of equipment that is excluded from or does not fall within the scope of this Directive, which can fulfil its function only if it is part of that equipment;

(c) filament bulbs.

4. In addition to the equipment specified in paragraph 3, from 15 August 2018, this Directive shall not apply to the following EEE:

(a) equipment designed to be sent into space;

(b) large-scale stationary industrial tools;

(c) large-scale fixed installations, except any equipment which is not specifically designed and

installed as part of those installations;

(d) means of transport for persons or goods, excluding electric two-wheel vehicles which are not type-approved;

(e) non-road mobile machinery made available exclusively for professional use;

(f) equipment specifically designed solely for the purposes of research and development that is only made available on a business-to-business basis;

(g) medical devices and in vitro diagnostic medical devices, where such devices are expected to be infective prior to end of life, and active implantable medical devices. 5. No later than 14 August 2015, the Commission shall review the scope of this Directive set out in point (b) of paragraph 1, including the parameters to distinguish between large and small equipment in Annex III, and shall present a report thereon to the European Parliament and to the Council. The report shall be accompanied by a legislative proposal, if appropriate.

3) Applicability of the WEEE directive to Seifert products

Article 3 defines large-scale industrial tools as:

‘large-scale stationary industrial tools’ means a large size assembly of machines, equipment, and/or components, functioning together for a specific application, permanently installed and de-installed by professionals at a given place, and used and maintained by professionals in an industrial manufacturing facility or research and development facility;

The intended purpose of Seifert product states that the products are:

.. intended as complementary accessories to large industrial equipment.

This information is included in the Technical information section of the product instruction manuals.

Therefore, as per scope of the WEEE directive, Seifert products are excluded as part of large-scale machines.

Reference should be made to the following WEEE FAQs.

3.17. Is equipment such as IT and telecommunication equipment used within a large-scale fixed installation or a large-scale stationary industrial tool excluded from the scope?

This depends. Equipment which is not specifically designed and installed as part of an excluded installation or tool is not excluded from the scope. Smoke detectors, computers and cables are

examples of equipment that is in scope. Only if for example a computer is specifically designed for a large-scale installation or tool, (e.g., an industrial PC to be integrated in and attached with the large-scale fixed installation), and if that computer can only function and be used within the large-scale fixed installation (because of its special hardware and/or construction), it is excluded as part of a large-scale fixed installation. If not placed within the large-scale fixed installation, such a computer has no possible functionality or use of its own.

3.18. Is lighting equipment covered by the exclusion of large scale fixed installations?

No. Article 2(4)(b) states that any equipment that is not specifically designed and installed as part of a large-scale fixed installation does not benefit from this exclusion. Lighting equipment is normally not specifically designed to be part of a specific installation, and is therefore in scope of the Directive.

Since all of the Seifert product range, including the cabinet light, is specifically designed and installed as part of large industrial equipment, and can only function and be used within the large-scale equipment, then these are excluded from the WEEE directive as part of a large fixed installation.

For any further information or questions kindly contact info@seifertsystems.com

Referenced documents

Directive 2012/19/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) - (recast)

Frequently Asked Questions on Directive 2012/19/EU on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), European Commission; April 2014

'http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/index_en.htm'; accessed 08/08/2018