

Legislation Outlook

April 2024



This monthly legislation briefing will help you plan for the maintenance of your ISO 14001, ISO 27001, ISO 45001 and ISO 50001 systems. We will provide advance warning about important legislation that will affect compliance with these standards, including relevant news, newly published guidance and government consultations, and any other significant legislation beyond the scope of the standards listed, which may potentially impact your organisation. We don't waste your time on items such as an increase in administrative fees, we only report on items of value.

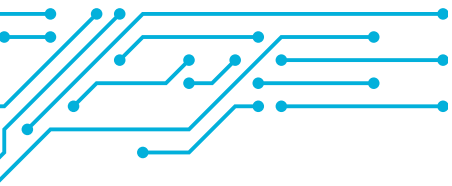
The start of April will see a glut of legislation coming into force, which clients will be informed of through their Activ system notifications if they are affected. However, there was little in the way of long lead-time legislation published last month, but clients in Northern Ireland may be interested in significant changes to the F-gas and ozone-depleting substances regimes made by new EU Regulations.

Updated Standard-Related Legislation

ISO 14001

Regulation (EU) 2024/573 on fluorinated greenhouse gases

Most of this new **F-Gas Regulation** came into force in Northern Ireland on 12th March 2024, and the new obligations have been added to the Activ legal compliance module.



The obligations that came into force in March introduced minimal changes to the regulatory regime in relation to fluorinated greenhouse gases. However, the Regulation does contain some major changes that will be introduced as detailed in the table below:



British Assessment Bureau

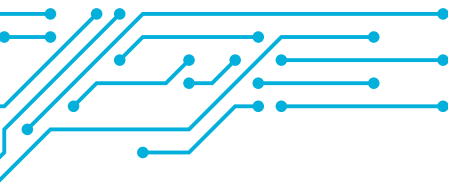
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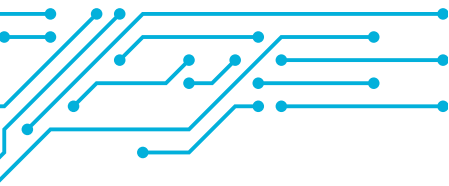
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(The advertisement also features a photograph of a man and a woman sitting at a desk, looking at a tablet together.)

1st January 2025	Building owners and contractors will have to ensure that emissions are minimised during the removal of foam panels and laminated boards that contain fluorinated greenhouse gases.
1st January 2025	New labelling and product and equipment information requirements come into force.
3rd March 2025	Organisations that import or export fluorinated greenhouse gases (or equipment containing them), or deal with quota allocations, must have a valid registration in the EU Commission’s F-gas Portal.



12th March 2025	New prohibition on the export of foams, technical aerosols, stationary refrigeration and stationary air-conditioning equipment and stationary heat pumps as referred to in Annex IV that contain, or whose functioning relies upon, fluorinated greenhouse gases with a GWP of 1 000 or more.
31st March 2025	The phased introduction of annual reporting of undertakings that deal with fluorinated greenhouse gases.
1st January 2026	New prohibition on the use of fluorinated greenhouse gases listed in Annex I for the maintenance or servicing of stationary refrigeration equipment, with the exclusion of chillers, with a global warming potential of 750 or more.
1st January 2026	New prohibition on the use of desflurane as an inhalation anaesthetic, except where such use is strictly required, and no other anaesthetic can be used on medical grounds.
1st January 2026	The commencement of phasing out the putting into operation electrical switchgear containing fluorinated greenhouse gases in insulating or breaking medium.
12th March 2027	Leakage checks and recovery of gases after the decommissioning of equipment containing them will be required for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• refrigeration units of refrigerated light-duty vehicles, intermodal containers, including reefers, and train wagons; and• air-conditioning equipment and heat pumps in heavy duty vehicles, vans, non-road mobile machinery used in agriculture, mining and construction operations, trains, metros, trams and aircraft.



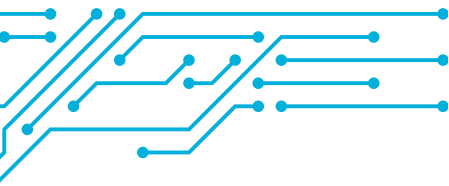
1st January 2028	New prohibition on the import and export of hydrofluorocarbons and of products and equipment containing hydrofluorocarbons or whose functioning relies upon those gases, from and to any country that is not a signatory to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.
1st January 2032	New prohibition on the use of fluorinated greenhouse gases listed in Annex I for the maintenance or servicing of air-conditioning equipment and heat pumps with a global warming potential of 2,500 or more.
1st January 2035	New prohibition on the use of sulfur hexafluoride (SF6) for the maintenance or servicing of electrical switchgear equipment unless it is reclaimed or recycled.



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Regulation (EU) 2024/590 on substances that deplete the ozone layer

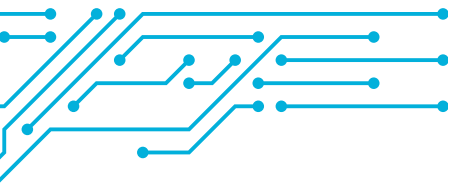
As per the new F-Gas Regulation, this **Regulation** came into force in Northern Ireland on 12th March 2024 and the new obligations in relation to ozone-depleting substances have been added to the Activ legal compliance module. The obligations that came into force in March introduced minimal changes to the regulatory regime in relation to ozone-depleting substances. However, the Regulation does contain some major changes that will be introduced as follows:

1st January 2025	Building owners and contractors will have to ensure that emissions are minimised during the removal of foam panels and laminated boards that contain ozone-depleting substances.
31st March 2025	Organisations that produce, import, export or destroy ozone-depleting substances, or use them as feedstock or process agents, will need to make an annual report to the EU Commission of the information set out in Annex VI.



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News

Further hedgerow protection announced

Following a consultation last year, in which 95% of responses backed government proposals, the Government has announced that 90,000km of English hedgerows will be given legal protection. New Regulations are to be published which include a two-metre 'buffer strip' from the centre of hedgerows with no cultivation or application of pesticides or fertilisers, and a hedge cutting ban between 1st March and 31st August to protect nesting birds. The new Regulations will sit alongside existing hedgerow protection in the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, which prohibit the removal of countryside hedgerows, or parts of them, without first seeking approval from the Local Planning Authority.

Guidance

Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS)

The Government has updated its **guidance** in relation to the Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme to inform qualifying undertakings that the Manage your Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (MESOS) system is now available for the registration of Phase 3 users and organisational accounts. The MESOS system will be updated again in April 2024 to allow notifications of compliance to be completed.

The guidance also now states that, whilst the official deadline for submitting notification is now 5th June 2024, the Environment Agency will not take any enforcement action against qualifying undertaking provided that account registration has been completed in the MESOS system by 5th June 2024 and notification of compliance is submitted by 6th August 2024.

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