

ARTSM Position Statement on Halogen Lamps - 14th September 2022

Introduction

This position statement provides an update on the current availability situation regarding halogen lamps, and is primarily focused on the M32 Halogen capsule lamps, generally used within all variants of halogen Signal Heads within UK traffic signals.

Background

In 2009 the EU set a target date of 2016 for the phase out of halogen lamps, as part of the EU Eco Design regulations. Subsequently the sale of mains voltage non directional lamps was banned in the UK on 1st September 2018.

There are however exemptions for certain “special industries” where there are limited suitable alternatives, and Traffic Signalling is covered by this exemption.

This means that for now the manufacture and sale of these products for use within the industrial application of Traffic Signalling is still legally permitted.

Notwithstanding this, it is not currently clear how long this classification will remain for.

Current Situation – September 2022

- The worldwide consumption of halogen lamps has reduced significantly in recent years, driven mainly by advances in LED technology, and the phase-out in sales of incandescent lamps for domestic applications.
- The automotive industry, which has historically been a large consumer of halogen lamps has transitioned over to LED alternatives much sooner than previously expected.
- The halogen gasses used within the manufacture of these lamps are primarily sourced from Russia & Ukraine. Due to the current conflict, obtaining these raw materials has been extremely difficult for the lamp manufacturers.
- Due to this significant reduction in the market for halogen lamps, and issues with raw material availability, many manufacturers have simply ceased producing these products, with no warning, or opportunity for a Last Time Buy.
- Although there is currently a small amount of product available within the worldwide marketplace, most of this product does not meet the requirements for use within Traffic Signalling.

Future Outlook

- ARTSM members are working hard to identify alternative sources of halogen lamps, and are actively working with a number of partners.
- There is however a significant risk that the M32 halogen capsule lamps will imminently disappear from the market, with no viable alternative product, and no opportunity for signal maintenance providers, or local authority customers to undertake a Last Time Buy.
- If this was to happen it would potentially not be possible ARTSM members to fulfil their contractual obligations to maintain traffic signals that utilise halogen lamps.

Considerations

Owing to the uncertain outlook customers may wish to consider the following points.

- Change of strategy for bulk lamp changing – replacing on lamp failure in order to preserve limited stocks.
- Acceleration of planned LED upgrade programmes, particularly for critical installations.
- Review of renewal strategies – The increased unit costs of energy may shorten the Return on Investment (RoI) period for site modernisations, and as such modernisation programmes that were not previously deemed cost effective, may now be so.

Summary

ARTSM members are continuing to monitor this situation closely and are collaboratively working to develop and source alternative halogen lamps.

There is however a significant risk that it will not be possible to obtain a suitable product, and what remaining product inventory ARTSM members currently have may quickly be exhausted.

ARTSM therefore have an obligation to make the wider industry aware of this situation, and the potential implications.