

BS/EN 12966:2014–Design, testing and CE marking of mobile, temporary and permanently installed VMS

Over the past months there has been concern expressed by Association members regarding the validity of BS/EN 12966:2014 and the fact that it has (i) not yet been gazetted in the Official Journal of the European Union and (ii) to which standard products should be designed, developed, tested and CE marked. In attempting to remove ambiguity, especially for our mobile and temporary VMS colleagues, guidance has been sought from BSi, CEN and the convener of the CEN TC226/WG11 committee.

The CEN TC 226/WG11 VMS committee has been aware of the problems and trying to resolve the points that have prevented the standard being gazetted in the OJEU. Enquiries have been made directly by a notified body to the Commission in Brussels and elicited a response by an EU Policy Officer, Lutz Köppen, that there are “a number of disqualifying deficiencies which did not allow the citation of the standard in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) as harmonised standard under the said Regulation”. The convener of CEN TC 226/WG11 who has been working diligently on this subject took exception to the remarks and it is worth reading the convener’s reaction.

I disagree with Lutz Köppen, that there are “a number of disqualifying deficiencies which did not allow the citation of the standard in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) as harmonised standard under the said Regulation”.

The problem is, that the bureaucrats have no technical competence and they cannot judge whether or not the claims are valid.

There was simply nobody available to justify the reasons for non-citation in the Official Journal, for at least 100 (!) pending standards.

The reference to 100 pending standards highlights that it is not only EN 12966:2014 that is delayed but many others across all sectors.

It can now be reported that CEN has re-appointed Mr Franci Ceklin, the CEN consultant who advised the CEN TC 226/WG11 VMS committee for several years to look over all the documentation and give his opinion to support and accelerate the EC evaluation and hopefully gazetting in the OJEU.

It is worth reminding ourselves what is stated in the EN 12966:2014.

Foreword

The second clause states:

“This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at latest by June 2015 and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by September 2016.”

The last clause states:

“According to the CEC-CENELEC Internal Regulations the national standards organisations of the following countries are bound to implement this European Standard:”

There follows a list of 33 countries of which 28 have implemented the standard including the UK.

The statements are clear and unequivocal; in line with the instructions BSi has published BS/EN 12966:2014 and withdrawn the conflicting 2005/2009 version of the standard.

Scope

The second clause states:

“This European Standard covers mobile, temporary and permanently installed VMS used in circulation areas, on public and private land, including tunnels for the information guidance warning and /or direction of traffic. Test modules are used to demonstrate compliance with the requirements.”

The mandate for the standard was amended in 2013 for safety reasons to ensure that mobile and temporary VMS are designed and manufactured to the same physical and visual requirements as permanently installed VMS.

The relevant points for our members are summarised below.

1. EN 12966:2014 is the current and valid standard. **It has not been withdrawn.**
2. EN 12966: 2014 is listed in the catalogue of European Standards
3. BS/EN 12966:2014 is the current and valid standard in the UK
4. EN 12966:2014 is the current and valid standard in all member states
5. EN 12966-1, 2 & 3:2005+A1:2009 were withdrawn on 30 September 2016; this was a formal act at national level to avoid conflict with EN 12966:2014
6. Enquiries and tenders including VMS have to refer to the current and valid standard EN 12966:2014
7. EN12966:2014 has not been listed yet in the Official Journal as a harmonised standard ,therefore, CE-marking can only be done by referring to EN 12966-1:2005+A1:2009
8. There are only small technical differences; in general the compliance with EN 12966:2014 implies the compliance with EN 12966-1:2005+A1:2009
9. If a specification is asking for T4, only T1 can be shown on the CE-marking (which is embedded in T4), but test reports can still confirm the performance and quality. The same applies to IP55 (if IP56 is tested) and L2 (if L2(*) is tested)
10. There is no standard-void, CE-marking has to be performed to EN 12966-1:2005+A1:2009 until further notice.

Roger Stainforth
October 2017