



ARTSM Position Statement on Halogen Lamps

February 2025 Update

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.

This statement provides an update on previously issued statements from June 2023 and September 2022.

Background

The sale of mains voltage non directional lamps was banned in the UK on 1st September 2018. There are however current exemptions for certain “special industries” where there are limited suitable alternatives, and Traffic Signalling has to date been covered by this exemption. This means that for now, the manufacture and sale of these products for use into the UK within the industrial application of Traffic Signalling is still legally permitted.

Given the UK commitment to Net Zero is not currently clear how long this classification will remain.

The key drivers of the current situation are summarised below;

- The worldwide consumption of halogen lamps has reduced significantly, 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.
- 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, manufacturers have simply ceased producing these products, with either little or no warning, or limited opportunity for a Last Time Buy.

Current Situation – February 2025

ARTSM members have worked with various suppliers to facilitate the ongoing supply of suitable M32 halogen capsule lamps for use with traffic signals. However, the following points should be noted

- There have been noticeable issues with the quality of some of these products compared to historical typical performance of this type of product. This can impact the life of the lamp and customers can notice an increase in early life lamp failures.
- Reliable supply of the product is now focused on a very limited number of suppliers increasing the risk that this product may be discontinued at short notice for the reasons outlined above, and without ARTSM members having sufficient opportunity to undertake a sufficient Last Time Buy.
- The longer-term security of the supply of the product cannot be guaranteed with ARTSM members being provided a limited 12-month visibility of supply
- The cost of the product has seen significant increases, which are expected to continue to increase over the short and medium term.

The above points demonstrate the increasing risk to reliable supply of M32 halogen capsule lamps which could become obsolete with no or insufficient notice. If this was to happen it would potentially not be possible for ARTSM members to maintain traffic signals that utilise halogen lamps.

Alternative Products

ARTSM have recently seen an increase in products placed on the marketplace, claiming to be suitable to be used as a direct replacement for halogen lamps.

Lamp monitoring is a key safety feature of all traffic signal controllers, and extreme caution must be exercised by customers when evaluating any alternative product that does not have the same performance characteristics as a halogen lamp and may therefore impact lamp monitoring.

Product users and procurers need to carefully consider the use of any alternative products, as potentially these may cause significant safety issues if they adversely impact the lamp monitoring capabilities of traffic signal controllers. Additionally, procurers must ensure that any such alternatives meet the requirements of all relevant UK legislation including, but not limited to, Electromagnetic Compatibility Regulations (EMC) and where applicable Radio Emissions Regulations (RER) and Traffic Signs Regulations (TSRGD), which includes optical performance.

Considerations & Future Outlook

- Local Authorities must be mindful of the significant volatility that remains regarding the continued supply of Halogen Lamps, and should be planning for the obsolescence of halogen Lamps within the next 5 years, or sooner.
- ARTSM continue to be actively engaged with this issue, and are liaising directly with government to ensure any issues arising from this obsolescence are understood, and if possible funding is made available to support product users.

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

- 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.

Please do not hesitate to contact ARTSM if you have any questions relating to this issue.