



gas technology for industry and education

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Gas control equipment service and replacement basic over view

It's over 14 years since the guidelines and codes of practice have recommended the 5 year "inspection " or "replacement" rule for gas regulators and manifold equipment used with compressed gas and gas mixtures.

This information letter is to give you a basic over view and some explanation of the issues which we are always being asked by our customers.

For more in-depth detail and other information please go to the BCGA web site.

The BCGA

The equipment manufactures and gas companies sit on the committees of the governing body the "BCGA", "British compressed gas association" and have a major input into what and how we use compressed gases and liquid. There are other bodies involved but for this topic we are not going to name them.

Generally neither party have previously helped the end user by marking their products in different ways. So most of us have been totally confused by what we are supposed to do or when we are to do it! Manly because the gas company say one thing and the way dating options have been applied with different manufacture and only two explanation of the 3 point 5 year replacement rule by the BCGA.

Previously 3 point

- 1. Replace with new easy to understand
2. Repair all the parts"internal and external", have to be replaced with new.
3. Retest ??

Question If you have a perfectly good working gas regulator you could just have it retested, then why do you have to replace or repair it?

Currently 2015 the 3 points options are

- 1. Replace with new easy to understand
2. Repair all the internal and external parts have to be replaced with the original manufacture parts.
3. Service exchange a manufactures repair or replacement which you part exchange your old regulator or other equipment covered by these COP.

To answer some of these issue

Over the years Freshford and other equipment repairers had access to most manufacture spare parts. The cost of which made a repair the cheaper option to buying new.

Some manufactures also had there own equipment "Exchange" deals where you could get a refurbished or new gas regulator when you traded in your old one.

Spare parts

The supply of these spare parts have slowly been, discontinued / withdrawn / or priced so that it becomes econnomicaly too expensive once labour costs have been added to the price of the parts to any regulator repair job.

Service Exchange

To date I don't know any manufacture still offering this option to the end user.

Freshford trade in discounts

We offer all our customers the option to trade in, "old for new" on most gas regulators. For more details please visit our web site www.freshfordltd.co.uk

Retest

No explanation has ever been given to cover this option. And was change some time ago to "service exchange".

So you the end user have to make the choice as to which is the best way to maintain safe equipment on site or on campus.

All regulator and gas cylinder user(s) should have in place an H & S risk assessment together with adequate inspection and service details for that equipment.

A retest has far has Freshford are concerned, should be treated like a car MOT. And it was ok and fit for purpose on the day of the test.

- Normally this would be undertaken periodically to make sure it's still within tolerance and leak free.

But before you consider any option to replace or renew you should also take into account the following

I regulator used once a week / month / year/ and used correctly is this going to need the same attention has one used 24 / 7?

It is down to the end user to put in place a service or replacement schedule which takes in to account the **safety of the operator** and how **accurate** the pressure and flow control is for that process or application you're using it for.

NOTE the current COPS do not offer an option for just "retest" after the 5 years in service expiry date.

Six years may become the norm to take into account of storage before sales or issue for use. We take the view that your 5 years should start on the date of issue not the manufactured date.

Full Repair

A full repair is classed as a "**new regulator**" repaired and retested to the standard to which it was 1st made. And assumes it still meets current practice and standard and original manufacture parts are used.

This can then be stamped up for another 5 years service.

Freshford Ltd , can only offer a full repair service at competitive prices for the Hilo and Harris brand as we have access to all spare parts for these regulators manufacture to BS EN ISO 2503 / 7291.

The Codes of Practice

You need to remember these ACOPs are issued as a guide for end users. The end user can define some safe working limits based on local condition and use.

Good documentation and service history is important in extending the service dates. But has this is somewhat a grey area for some industry and universities who may not have engineering skills or knowledge , so most opt for belts and braces approach and go for either replace with new or take up our offer of the trade in "old for new" discounts. This does give the customer peace of mind once the service life as expired.

It should be borne in mind that whilst the requirements contained within the HSC & BCGA approved codes of practice are not law. These codes **do** have legal status.

The code states" if you are prosecuted for breach of Health and Safety law", and it is proved that you did not follow the relevant provisions of the code(s); a court will find you and the company negligent in your duties under the provisions.

Hence it is essential to be aware of the ACOP interpretation of this and other regulations. Neglect or dereliction of these duties may also invalidate any public liability insurance claims.

End