



Technical Information

COMPRESSED AIR WARNING SIGNS T.10 ON MOTOR VEHICLES

EC legislation now in force in UK requires commercial vehicles carrying compressed gases and other hazardous substances, to carry a Hazard Warning sign which emergency services will recognise and make allowances for when dealing with road traffic accidents. For compressed air cylinders, the sign is a green diamond (minimum size 100mm square) with a cylinder symbol and the words Compressed Air.

Amateur divers have asked if there is any legal requirement for them to display such a sign when transporting aqualung cylinders in private cars. BSAC has sought advice from the Health and Safety Executive, and we are assured by an Inspector from the HSE Diving National Interest Group that **this legislation applies only to those who are at work, not to those carrying gas cylinders in private cars for recreational purposes.**

The legislation is likely to apply to diving school staff / professional recreational diving instructors carrying cylinders in a private car when used for business, but it does not apply to the average diving club member going about their recreational pursuit; nor does anything in the legislation suggest that it might be expanded to include recreational users in future.

Divers might think it socially responsible to display such a sign on their cars when carrying cylinders on the highway - and it would not be illegal to do so - but the legislation states that the sign should be displayed **only** while cylinders are actually in transit. If there are no cylinders in the car, there should be no sign suggesting that there are. Bearing in mind that the signs are usually in the form of a window sticker, this could be a problem! Furthermore, permanent display of such a sign might invite criminals to break into the car, hoping to find something valuable to steal.

To summarise, HSE have made it clear to BSAC that the legislation does not apply to persons who are not at work, so is not applicable to recreational divers going about their chosen sport.

(The HSE are likely to introduce their own explanatory brochure on this subject, at which time this Information Sheet will be reviewed and modified if necessary).