

What is the Issue?

The **Machinery Directive** is the core European legislation regulating the mechanical engineering industry. It provides the regulatory basis for the harmonisation of the essential health and safety requirements for machinery at the level of the entire European Union.

The Machinery Directive performs a dual function: It promotes the free movement of goods (in this case, machinery) within the European Union and, at the same time, guarantees a high level of protection to European workers and citizens.

The Machinery Directive is a so-called "[New Approach](#)" Directive, which means that it promotes harmonisation through mandatory health and safety requirements set in the legislation and voluntary harmonised standards.

Field of application:

- What is machinery? Machinery is described in the Directive as *"an assembly of linked parts or components, at least one of which moves, with the appropriate actuators, control and power circuits, etc., joined together for a specific application, in particular for the processing, treatment, moving or packaging of a material"*. It is the responsibility of the machine manufacturer to verify whether a particular product falls within the scope of the Machinery Directive.
- The Directive applies to machinery which is intended to be placed (or put into service) onto the market of the European Union for the first time.
- Essentially, the Machinery Directive applies to all mechanical equipment where the major risk to safety is deemed to be mechanical. In any case relevant provisions of other EC Directives, where appropriate must be taken into account in order to achieve full compliance with the Directive.

The existing [Machinery Directive 98/37/EC](#) will remain applicable until the 29th December 2009. A [revised Machinery Directive - 2006/42/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on machinery - was published on 9th June 2006 and will become applicable as from 29th December 2009: until that date, the current Machinery Directive 98/37/EC continues to apply.

Relevant European bodies active in the field of the Machinery Directive are the following:

- Standing Committee for the Machinery Directive: This body chaired by the European Commission and composed by Member States and stakeholders' representatives including Orgalime, deals with all issues related to the correct implementation of the Machinery Directive (e.g. adequate interpretation, adoption of guidance on the Directive, etc).
- European Commission's Editorial Group: This body, chaired by the Commission and composed of a selected number of experts from Member states and stakeholders including Orgalime, is in charge of preparing and drafting the draft Guidelines for the interpretation of the new Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC.
- Orgalime's Machinery Directive Core Group: This Orgalime group is the acknowledged industrial platform entitled to co-ordinate, streamline and agree on all relevant industrial input into the Editorial Group. Its tasks include to reach industrial agreement on grey areas and provide the co-ordinated all-industry input to the European Commission for the drafting of the Guidelines on the Machinery Directive 2006/42/ EC. The Orgalime's Machinery Directive Core Group also sends representatives to the Drafting Working group and follows the progress and discussions on the Guidelines. Orgalime's Machinery Directive Core Group is composed of industry experts and is fully committed to deliver accurate, quality input to the Commission in order to contribute to adequate, easy to use, user-friendly Guidelines, which Orgalime consider key to a smooth, effective and coherent application of the Machinery Directive throughout the European Union.

Orgalime, the European Engineering Industries Association, speaks for 35 trade federations representing some 130,000 companies in the mechanical, electrical, electronic, metalworking & metal articles industries of 23 European countries. The industry employs some 11 million people in the EU and in 2007 accounted for some €1,813 billion of annual output. The industry not only represents more than one quarter of the output of manufactured products but also a third of the manufactured exports of the European Union.