

S11 – Receipt of Explosives Guidance

The 'Placing on the Market and Supervision of Transfers of Explosives Regulations 1993', or POMSTER, include controls on the transfer of explosives. These apply to all movements of civil explosives - whether import, export, or movements within Great Britain (parallel regulations apply in Northern Ireland)

For the purpose of these regulations, transfer means the moving of explosives from place to place except movement within one site (such as a factory, mine, quarry, construction or demolition site).

The Regulations apply to transfers of ALL explosives - except:

- ammunition,
- pyrotechnic articles,
- explosives intended for lawful use by the police or armed forces,
- explosives articles in airbags and seat belt pre-tensioners, and
- the components of small arms ammunition when being transferred for the recipient's private use. (The commercial transfers of components of small arms ammunition are subject to the transfer controls).

When being transferred ALL explosives covered by the Regulations must be accompanied by a Recipient Competent Authority (RCA) document, issued by the Health and Safety Executive. More information about RCA documents, including how to apply, is at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/explosives/forms.htm>

RCA documents are issued to the person or company that will be in physical possession of the explosives after the transfer has taken place (the consignee). The RCA document is the approval for all transfers of explosives that the consignee is legally entitled to acquire or keep.

What are my responsibilities under the transfer requirements?

If you are a supplier (consignor) you must ensure that the person or company (the consignee) you are consigning explosives to has an RCA document covering the explosives to be transferred. The consignee has to send you a valid RCA document or a certified true copy when ordering, or show you an RCA document if collecting in person, before the transfer can take place. If despatching a consignment of explosives with a carrier, you must give the carrier the consignee's RCA document, or certified copy, which must then accompany the explosives throughout their entire journey. Your regular consignees may decide to send you a batch of certified copies of their RCA document to avoid delays when ordering. You must then ensure that one document accompanies each consignment.

If you are a carrier you must receive from the consignor an RCA document, or a certified true copy, approving the transfer of any explosives covered by the transfer requirements. The RCA document must accompany the explosives during their journey. If different modes of transport are used during the transfer the RCA document must be passed from one to the other with the explosives. If you are carrying more than one consignment on the same vehicle, each individual consignment must be accompanied by the consignee's RCA document, or a certified copy. At the completion of the journey the RCA document must be passed to the consignee with the delivered explosives. It is the carrier's responsibility to ensure that the consignee's RCA document always accompanies the explosives.



If you are receiving explosives (consignee) you must obtain an RCA document before any explosives are transferred to you. You will then have to send or show the RCA document, or a certified copy, to your supplier (consignor) before the transfer can take place. If you receive explosives regularly, you may wish to send a batch of certified copies of your RCA document to your supplier to avoid delays.

If you are moving your own explosives you become the consignor, the carrier and the consignee and should simply keep your RCA document with you. If you collect your own explosives from a supplier (consignor), you will need to show them the RCA document, or a certified copy, before you can take the explosives. You must ensure that the RCA document accompanies the explosives at all times during the transfer.

How to apply for an RCA document

RCA documents are issued by HSE. Most explosives covered by the transfer requirements also require a Certificate to Acquire/Acquire and Keep (Explosives Certificate) which is issued by the Police. In order to obtain (or renew) an RCA document, you should send a photocopy or fax of your current Explosives Certificate to HSE's Explosives Policy Team. If you have had an RCA document before, it helps if you also include a copy of it (or give its reference number a covering note).

HSE will then send you an RCA document which will include the UN Numbers of the explosives shown on your Explosives Certificate. It will also include the UN Numbers for those explosives to which the transfer requirements apply but which do not require an Explosives Certificate to acquire and keep (eg Smokeless Powder). The RCA document's expiry date will be the same as the expiry date on your Explosives Certificate.

If you need an RCA document to cover only explosives subject to the transfer requirements, but for which an Explosives Certificate is not required, you should write to or fax HSE's Explosives Policy Team, specifying the explosives you wish to transfer. HSE will then send you an RCA document to cover those explosives. In this case, the RCA document will have an unlimited expiry date.

Retaining your RCA document

The Regulations require you to keep the RCA document or a certified copy for a period of three years after completion of the transfer. In practice, for limited duration RCA documents, this will mean three years after its expiry.

Explosive store licensing

Due to the detailed legal requirements associated with licensing please refer to the procedures on the HSE website.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/explosives/index.htm>

