New guidance on EHSR 2.2 of the Lifts Directive

LEIA Technical Director, Nick Mellor, answers questions about the changes

There are important changes in the BEIS (the government department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) guidance for derogation to Essential Health and Safety Requirement (EHSR) 2.2 of the Lifts Directive. This impacts the pit depth and headroom dimensions required if derogation is to be avoided, and affects lifts placed in service after 31 August 2017. The BEIS guidance, which has been agreed with UK Notified Bodies and LEIA, has been issued as a LEIA Technical Guidance Note (revising the previous BIS guidance) and is publicly available here.

Why is the guidance changing?

EHSR 2.2 of the Lifts Directive requires permanent refuge spaces, but allows each member state to interpret what a permanent refuge space is. In the UK, BEIS’ opinion is that the permanent refuge spaces are as defined in harmonised standards: BS EN 81-1 and BS EN 81-2 until these are withdrawn on 31 August 2017. From 1 September 2017, BS EN 81-20 will be the only harmonised standard for the design of new lifts. Then the definition of permanent refuge spaces in BS EN 81-20 must be used for new lifts in new buildings or BS EN 81-21 for new lifts in existing buildings.

What are the implications for a new lift being placed into service latest 31 August 2017?

The refuge spaces defined in BS EN 81-1 and BS EN 81-2 are required. If these refuge spaces cannot be accommodated for either pit or head room then derogation is required.

See the left side of matrices on pages 6 and 7 of the guidance for lifts placed into service until 31 August 2017.

Note: A lift which conforms to BS EN 81-20 except for refuge spaces to BS EN 81-1 or BS EN 81-2 requires a Notified Body approval e.g. Design Examination Certificate (DEC).

What are the implications for a new lift being placed into service from 1 September 2017?

The refuge spaces required by BEIS to meet EHSR 2.2 are defined as:

- BS EN 81-20:2014 Clause 5.2.5.7.1 in respect of headroom and 5.2.5.8.1 in respect of the pit for new lifts in new buildings.
- BS EN 81-20:2017 Clause 5.6.2.4 in respect to headroom and 5.8.2.4 in respect of the pit for new lifts in existing buildings (once this standard is published).

See the procedures shown on the right side of the matrices on pages 6 and 7 of the guidance.

The following further sections are for lifts to be placed into service from 1 September 2017.
What if the new lift is in a new building?

If the lift is in conformity with BS EN 81-20 clauses 5.2.5.7.1 for headroom and 5.2.5.8.1 for pit depth, then no derogation from BEIS is required (although Notified Body approval is required if the lift is not fully to BS EN 81-20).

If the lift is not in conformity with these clauses, then adequate refuge spaces cannot be accommodated and derogation from BEIS will be required. See the guidance here.

BS EN 81-21 may not be used on new lifts in new buildings unless derogation from BEIS is obtained.

What if the new lift is in an existing building?

If the lift is in conformity with BS EN 81-20 clauses 5.2.5.7.1 for headroom and 5.2.5.8.1 for pit depth, then no derogation from BEIS is required as the lift can be treated as above for new lifts in new buildings.

If those refuge spaces are not available, then derogation will not be required if the lift is in conformity with BS EN 81-21:2017 (when published).

Note: an existing building is one which is used or was already used before the order for the lift was placed.

What type of lifts might be affected?

Since BS EN 81-21:2017 (when published) will be able to be used for new lifts in existing buildings, the main call for derogation will be for new lifts in new buildings. We see the following implications.

- Small lifts (lifts smaller than 6 person/450 kg might be affected) where only standing refuge spaces can be used so requiring greater pit or headroom dimensions.
- All lifts which are currently “low headroom” (typically with speeds not greater than 1 m/s and headroom dimensions in the range 2.8 m – 3.5 m which might not need derogation currently) may well require derogation after 31 August 2017, and we would urge a review of any contracts involving such cases.
- Lifts which currently have an EC Type Examination certificate for reduced headroom or reduced pit where the relevant permanent refuge spaces cannot be accommodated.

Faced with the possibility of greatly increased numbers of applications, we expect BEIS might take a hard line over such derogation applications. Prior approval only is allowed (i.e. before installation starts).

Can BS EN 81-21:2009 or BS EN 81-21:2017 (when published) be used for new lifts in new buildings?

No – derogation from BEIS will be required.

Can BS EN 81-21:2009 be used in conjunction with BS EN 81-20 until BS EN 81-21:2017 is available?

Yes, the technical requirements found in this standard may be used, but the refuge spaces which are created must be compliant with BS EN 81-20 refuge dimensions. Notified Body approval will also be required.

Why can’t BS EN 81-21:2009 be used from 1 September 2017 until withdrawn on 31 August 2018?

BS EN 81-21:2009 references the refuge spaces in BS EN 81-1 and BS EN 81-2 which will be withdrawn after 31 August 2017 (so will not provide a presumption of conformity to EHSRs of the Lifts Directive). BS EN 81-21:2009 can be used in conjunction with the refuge spaces in BS EN 81-20 (which will need Notified Body approval), or derogation obtained from BEIS.