

GUIDANCE ON TOPAS



Introduction

TOPAS – Traffic Open Products And Specifications

The current position as it applies to those ARTSM members with Traffic Control and VMS products is as follows

This information has been taken directly from the TOPAS website at <http://www.topasgroup.org.uk/manufacturers-information.htm>

Manufacturers are invited to register their products under the [TOPAS 0600 registration procedure](#). Products Type Approved to the Highways England preceding TR25** series of specifications will be transferred to the TOPAS product register free of charge on request. Full HA documentation will be needed for this transfer. Those Type Approved under previous or other specifications will not currently be included. Non-registration of products by TOPAS does not imply revocation of existing HA Type Approvals. Authorities procuring traffic control equipment are advised to check directly with manufacturers.

As a supplier of products with HA approvals you need to decide how many of these products you would like to have on the TOPAS product register.

You will need to complete a Request Form providing a list of the products that you want to appear on the register, and forward this, together with certified copies of the HA approval certificates/letters and any other relevant information, to enquiries@topas.org.uk. This Form is available on line at www.topasgroup.org.uk.

Any new product registrations (not transfers) will incur a single one-off fee of £1000 per product. (This cost does not include Technical Assessors fees to verify compliance to specification, see TOPAS0600 for a detailed description of the process).

TOPAS does not offer a consultancy or advisory service to manufacturers. We are a voluntary organisation made up of several sectors of industry and must remain impartial at all times. Manufacturers are invited to seek clarification of requirements from TOPAS specifications. Manufacturers should check that products conform with all the specifications they intend to rely on for any product registration. In addition they must satisfy themselves that they conform with all regulations and statutory requirements both in relation to EU and UK currently in force.

Guidance in relation to products for use in the UK and requirements which exist may be available from independent industry consultants and/or other commercial and professional bodies in addition to Highways England and Department of Transport.

If manufacturers have a specific issue relating to the product and its specification requirements then it should provide a summary of the issues for the Board to consider.

Should you have any questions please contact enquiries@topasgroup.org.uk .

Products with current registrations will appear on the website - this will be the definitive record of current registrations and will be maintained regularly. If a product does not appear on the register please contact enquiries@topasgroup.org.uk

The background to TOPAS

Following the removal of statutory Type Approval, it was felt within the industry that it would be desirable for the UK to maintain a formal process which ensures a certain level of confidence in these products and their interoperability. Moreover, standardised specifications reduce design and production costs, with benefits to both manufacturers and users.

Traffic Systems Group (TSG) and ARTSM considered these issues through its Traffic Technology Forum. Working together with the Highways Agency and DfT to implement a new, open and accessible process that will provide such continuity of both standard product specifications and product registration. The intention in taking up this legacy from the DfT is to continue to support and enhance the professionalism and status of those in the industry, which will be of lasting benefit to the sector.

As a result TOPAS (**Traffic Open Products & Specifications**) has now been set up to coordinate the management and development of technical specifications for traffic control and related equipment. TOPAS offers a straightforward means for customers to verify manufacturers' compliance with the specifications through a new Product Registration system, replacing Type Approval.

TOPAS has been endorsed by the DfT, ARTSM and ADEPT, who have provided the initial funding. TOPAS is run by a Management Board comprised of delegates from Government from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; Users including the HA and Local Authorities (through TSG); and manufacturers (through ARTSM).

Local Authorities' engineers and buyers will adopt the TOPAS specifications and write them into their technical specifications and procurement documents with the expectation that they (and through them any body who purchasers products for use on the UK roads) will call up TOPAS registration as a condition of purchase.

The purposes and aims of TOPAS are:

- To maintain technical specifications for traffic control and associated equipment previously maintained by the Highways Agency (TR25** series);
- To maintain a list of registered products verifying compliance with the testing requirements of individual technical specifications;
- To provide a robust but simple process for registration of products by manufacturers that is open to all and which will be accessible to all those in industry via a website;
- To make the registrations available to be used by purchasing authorities to support the aim of minimising procurement costs and encouraging standardisation;
- To identify opportunities for enhanced technical specifications for traffic control equipment;
- To manage the consultation process for new technical specifications for traffic control equipment proposed by manufacturers;
- To develop proposals for the use of equipment that address a wide range of traffic control problems;
- Through the Management Board, bring together professionals from partner bodies to ensure that technical specifications are maintained and developed to reflect changing technologies and circumstances;
- To deliver reports on the effectiveness of technical specifications;

The former 'Type Approval' arrangements operated by Highways England on behalf of the Secretary of State is now a product registration process, with a published register of compliant products. TOPAS0600, (closely based on the structure and concept of TRG0600), defines this process. Interested parties will be able to access all relevant documents from the TOPAS website.

TOPAS is now live and open for registration of products. It operates as a web-accessed service providing copies of TOPAS specifications and the product register.

A process of review of specifications will take place annually and all interested parties will be invited to make comment through the website.

Working Groups 3 and 4 provide a forum for consolidating and responding to specification reviews.

Compiled: M Pleydell, Chair WG4 26th Oct 2017