



Joint industry position paper on the digital declaration of conformity

11 July 2023

The signatories of this position paper are impacted by several pieces of EU harmonisation legislation (for instance, Machinery Directive - MD, Outdoor Noise Directive - OND, Radio Equipment Directive – RED etc.) requiring manufacturers to draw up an EU Declaration of Conformity (DoC).

The current practice and understanding (according to the guidelines of interpretation to specific harmonised legislation, like the MD) is that the term ‘accompany’ is associated with a paper format of the DoC. However, other than the guidelines, there is no legal text that is specifically referring to the paper format.

An exclusive paper format requirement no longer reflects today’s digital age, deviating from the EU’s ambition to achieve the dual green and digital transition. An important step forward has already been taken in recent or upcoming legislation such as the Radio Equipment Directive (RED), the Machinery Regulation (MR) which explicitly permit the use of a digital DoC, provided that it is made accessible by the manufacturer either via an internet address or via other digital means such as a machine-readable code. Another example of legislation that embraces the opportunities of digitisation is the upcoming Ecodesign Regulation for sustainable products which introduces a digital product passport for certain product categories.

In some cases (MD, OND), the DoC needs to accompany the product in question when it is placed on the market. According to these two pieces of legislation, ‘accompany’ is interpreted as implying ‘paper format’. Therefore, manufacturers of products covered by multiple legislation are facing legal uncertainty as to the format that they can use when providing the DoC with the product. This is especially relevant because the Blue Guide sets out the rule that, when a product falls in the scope of various pieces of harmonisation legislation, a single DoC must be produced covering all the various directives and regulations that the product complies with.

Therefore, the signatories of this paper believe that it is necessary to clarify in the Blue Guide that the term “accompany” in relation to documentation can, unless the provision of the paper format is specified in sector-specific legislation, be taken to mean either providing the DoC on paper or digitally. This would ensure a harmonised use of digital DoCs across all EU relevant legislation.



We would like to propose that the Blue Guide (paragraph 7.4.1.1) is amended to allow the option of providing the DoC electronically, as follows:

“It shall accompany the product where so required by specific Union harmonisation legislation. *When accompanying a product, the EU Declaration of Conformity may either be provided on paper or by digital means. If provided digitally, the manufacturer shall provide information as to where the EU Declaration of Conformity can be accessed*”.

This amendment to the Blue Guide, which applies horizontally to all harmonised legislation, would be key in resolving the current legal uncertainty that manufacturers are facing when their products fall under multiple legislation.

List of signatories

EGMF, the European Garden Machinery Federation, represents major manufacturers of garden, landscaping, forestry and turf equipment, www.egmf.org

CECE the Committee for European Construction Equipment, represents the interests of 1,200 construction equipment manufacturers through national trade associations in Europe.

EUROGEN is the European Generating Set Industry Association, www.europgen.eu.

EUUnited, European Engineering Industries, the voice of machinery and equipment suppliers in Europe.

EPTA, the European Power Tool Association represents 25 European manufacturers of electrical power tools with a strong production base in central Europe.

FEM represents the European manufacturers of materials handling, lifting and storage equipment.

Pneurop is the European association of manufacturers of compressors, vacuum pumps, pneumatic tools and allied equipment.