1972. No. 69 **[C]**

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Electric Blankets

REGULATIONS*, DATED 9TH FEBRUARY 1972, MADE BY THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS UNDER SECTIONS 1 AND 2(4), (5) AND (6) OF THE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1965.

The Ministry of Home Affairs, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Sections 1 and 2(4), (5) and (6) of the Consumer Protection Act (Northern Ireland) 1965(a) and after consulting with such persons and bodies of persons as appears to it requisite, hereby makes the following Regulations:

Citation and commencement

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Electric Blankets (Safety) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1972 and (with the exception of Regulation 5 which shall come into operation on 1st September 1972) shall come into operation on 1st April 1972.

Interpretation

2.—(1) In these Regulations—

"the Act" means the Consumer Protection Act (Northern Ireland) 1965;

"electric blanket" means an electrical appliance designed or suitable for household use which has as its principal part an electrically heated blanket (which exceeds 0.15 square metres in area and does not exceed 100 mm in thickness) and is intended to be connected to an electricity supply having a voltage not exceeding 250 volts;

"the Standard of 1971" means the British Standard Specification for the Testing and Approval of Household Electrical Appliances Section A4 Electrically-Heated Blankets BS.3456: Section A4: 1971, as published on 4th February 1971, with the exception of Appendix D to that specification (which contains recommendations relating to radio interference).

(2) Any reference to any requirement or test specified in the Standard of 1971 includes a reference to any requirement or test incorporated in that specification by reference to one or more other British Standard specifications.

(3) Any reference to a British Standard Specification (other than the Standard of 1971) is to be construed as a reference to that specification as amended before 4th February 1971.

Electric blankets not bearing BEAB Certification

3.—(1) Paragraphs (2) and (3) shall apply to any electric blanket (whether it is of a kind mentioned in clause 1 of the Standard of 1971 or

(a) 1965. c. 14 (N.I.).

*These Regulations were affirmed by a Resolution of each House of Parliament on 14th March 1972.

not) other than one which bears a certification mark of the British Electrotechnical Approvals Board for Household Equipment (formerly known as the British Electrical Approvals Board for Domestic Appliances), indicating that the blanket conforms to BS.3456.

(2) An electric blanket shall comply with the requirements of the Standard of 1971 and be capable of satisfying any of the tests specified in that specification:

Provided that clauses 3, 5 and 7 of that specification (which relate to performances generally, voltage rating and marks and explanatory literature) shall not have effect for the purposes of this Regulation.

(3) In the case of an electric blanket of which the principal part is intended to be used as an under-blanket and to be kept switched on notwithstanding that a person is occupying the bed upon which it is used, the electric blanket shall have an isolating transformer and be so designed that no electricity other than electricity having an alternating voltage not exceeding 30 volts AC will be applied to that part.

Labelling

4. An electric blanket shall on some part thereof be legibly and durably marked so as to indicate the matters specified in the Schedule.

5. Where an electric blanket is individually packed in a box or other container, that box or container shall be conspicuously marked so as to indicate in words whether the blanket is for use as an over-blanket or as an under-blanket and, if as an under-blanket, whether the blanket is or is not suitable to be kept switched on when a person is occupying the bed upon which it is used.

Goods already manufactured

6. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 2 of the Act (which prohibit sales and possession for sale of goods and component parts not complying with regulations) shall apply in relation to goods and component parts manufactured before the imposition of these requirements notwithstanding anything in subsection (4) of that section (which exempts such goods and parts unless regulations otherwise provide).

Letting under hire-purchase agreement or on hire

7. Section 2(1) (2) and (3) (other than paragraphs (*d*) and (*e*) of subsection (3)) of the Act (which relate to sale and possession for sale of goods and component parts not complying with regulations) shall, except as provided by section 2(6), apply in relation to goods to which these Regulations apply as if references to selling or to a sale included references to letting under a hire-purchase agreement or on hire, and the reference to a sale under a credit-sale agreement were a reference to a letting under a hire-purchase agreement.

Local authorities

8.—(1) The Schedule to the Act shall have effect in relation to goods to which these Regulations apply.

(2) Any test of goods to which these Regulations apply, being a test such as is referred to in paragraph 2 of the Schedule to the Act (which empowers a local authority to purchase goods for the purpose of a test) shall be carried

out, at the expense of the local authority, by such person or body as may be authorised by the Ministry of Home Affairs under this Regulation to carry out such tests.

(3) In relation to goods to which these Regulations apply "local authority" in the Schedule to the Act shall mean the health authority for the area of each County and County Borough.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Ministry of Home Affairs for Northern Ireland this 9th day of February 1972.

(L.S.) *W. A. Willis,*
Assistant Secretary.

SCHEDULE Regulation 4

Markings required on electric blankets

The rated voltage or voltage range in volts.

The rated input in watts.

A warning against using the blanket when folded, rucked or creased.

A warning against laundering, or against dry-cleaning, or against both laundering and dry-cleaning, as the case may require.

In the case of a blanket to be connected only to an AC electricity supply or only to a DC electricity supply, the type of current (AC or DC) to be used.

Additional Requirements

In the case of an over-blanket

A warning against using the blanket otherwise than as an over-blanket.

A warning against switching on the blanket when it is wet.

In the case of an under-blanket for heating a bed even when occupied

A warning against using the blanket otherwise than as an under-blanket.

In the case of an under-blanket for heating a bed only when unoccupied

A warning against using the blanket otherwise than as an under-blanket.

A warning against switching on the blanket when it is wet.

A warning either that the blanket must be disconnected from the electricity supply before the user gets into bed or that the blanket must be switched off before the user gets into bed.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations, but is intended to indicate their general purport.)

These Regulations impose a standard of safety in relation to the sale or possession for sale of electric blankets.

From the operative date all electric blankets subject to certain exceptions, and other than those approved by the British Electrotechnical Approvals Board (BEAB), must comply with the requirements of British Standard 3456 (BS.3456: Section A4: 1971), except for clauses 3, 5 and 7. These clauses relate to performance generally, voltage rating, marks and explanatory notes, which are covered by the Regulations. Under Regulation 7, letting on hire or hire-purchase is similarly subject to the requirements of the Regulations.

In addition, all electric blankets, including those approved by BEAB, must comply with requirements relating to the marking or labelling of blankets and marking on the boxes or containers in which the blankets are individually packed. Goods manufactured before the coming into operation of the Regulations are subject to the Regulations.