



Statement explaining the suspension of the mutual recognition agreement for the EN 54-10 & EN 54-12 environmental/EMC tests and the planned resolutions

In 2012, the EFSG extended the scope of the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for fire alarm systems. It was known at the time that some parts of EN 54 would require considerable effort to reach full agreement. As this was not possible in the short time required, it was decided to accept the environmental and EMC tests as standard. This decision applied to EN 54-10 and EN 54-12 and worked well for a number of years.

During a subsequent inter-laboratory comparative testing exercise based on Part 12 in 2018 (comprising Round-Robin Testing with laboratory audits and corresponding reports), differences were found between the test methods used. At that time, the test equipment was partially harmonized, but differences such as the use of a non-standard attenuation filter remained to some extent. Each laboratory assessed the risks associated with accepting the non-standard test results and in June 2023, the Board of Management voted to continue accepting the environmental/EMC tests as before.

However, one member disagreed with the outcome of the BoM vote and exercised its right as an independent certification body not to accept the results of the non-standard tests performed before and after the EMC and environmental conditioning and requested the withdrawal of the environmental tests according to EN 54-12 and the application of a compliant filter system.

At the time this decision was made a customer had already signed a contract with a primary certification body with non-conforming performance. Fortunately, testing had not yet started and arrangements were made to outsource the environmental testing to another associated testing laboratory.

Nevertheless, there are still differences of opinion on the technical issue and the interpretation of the test results, which have not yet been resolved.

A similar situation now exists with Part 10, where differences were identified in an inter-laboratory test. In this case, customer projects were affected as all initial testing had already been completed.

The cases show that, in addition to the technical dispute, there were also gaps in EFSG's communication. This meant that EFSG was not informed of these decisions until after the customers had been notified, meaning that there was no opportunity for early communication with industry.

EFSG apologizes for not having foreseen such a situation. Several crisis meetings have already been held in order to bring a customer-oriented approach back into focus and, above all, to prevent such a situation from occurring again in the future. Among other things, a 'communication crisis channel' was immediately established within the EFSG. This has now also been extended between the EFSG and Euralarm. The EFSG Board of Management will meet in Cologne Germany, on November 20th 2024. In addition to the review that has already been completed, the main focus of the meeting will be the future course of action. Furthermore, the MRA will be updated at the end of November 2024 to reflect the current situation for the recognition of EN 54 Part 10 and Part 12.

In the meantime, to avoid further incidents of this nature, the MRA download on the EFSG website has been temporarily disabled. The agreement is still in place and customers are advised on the website to contact their primary certification body so that the situation can be clarified.

Work is underway to resolve the differences. Planned changes should lead to full recognition of Part 12. The audit and Round-Robin Testing programme related to Part 10 is ongoing and will not be completed until early 2025. Therefore, it is not possible to determine at this stage whether full recognition will be achieved, but the EFSG expects at least the reintroduction of Part 10 environmental and EMC testing.