

## **CHILD SAFETY LEGISLATION**

The implementation of the EN13120 directive on child safety, soon to come into force, will require us as manufacturers and yourselves as retailers to make sure that all blinds conform to the regulations prescribed in the directive. There is nothing to be over concerned about and you will soon get to grips with what is required.

In simple english this will mean :-

We, as manufacturers, must make sure that all blinds we supply comply with the directive.

You, as the retailer, must make sure that blinds are fitted in accordance with the directive.

For us to meet our obligations we will require you :-

To supply the details of your requirement **IN WRITING** (telephone orders will **NOT** be acceptable) and in addition to the details of the blind required you **MUST** give us the **FITTING HEIGHT** that the blind is to be installed at. We have both fax-back order forms and an on-line order form to enable you to send us your orders - please ask for details if you require them. We can then make sure that we manufacture your blind in accordance with the requirements of the directive.  
**THIS PROCEDURE WILL APPLY TO ALL ORDER RECEIVED AFTER 28TH FEBRUARY.**

What you will need to do is, when you are in the process of taking an order from your customer, make sure that they understand what you will be required to do when fitting the blind to be in accordance with the regulations. The customer cannot ask you to do something which will be contrary to the requirements - there is no opt out for anyone - and if they say they do not wish to co-operate then, I am afraid, you must decline their business . If you should fit a blind in such a way that does not conform you could be held liable for any consequences just as we also would be liable if we should manufacture a blind that does not conform which is why we will need the manufacturing information in writing then there can be no confusion over your requirements

Please note that , once the blind has been supplied, we will **NOT** be liable for any situation which should arise between you and your customer when you come to instal the blind and then find that they are not prepared to allow you to do what is required.

We are obliged to attach to the blind information which identifies us as the manufacturer, our order number and the date of manufacture - this will be done in a discrete way and should not be obvious to your customer. You will also need to keep your records of the blinds installed with all the relevant information such as fitting height and details of the safety procedures adopted.

There will be safety labels attached to the blind(s) and you should make your customer aware of these and the safety devices you might have fitted.

If you employ fitters whose job is just to instal blinds then you must make them aware of the procedures since, you as the proprietor, will carry the responsibility if anything should not be done as required.

The legislation is typically full of legal terms but we hope we have managed to summarise the main requirements as follows.

**THE FOLLOWING BLINDS ARE "SAFE BY DESIGN" AND DO NOT NEED ANY EXTRA SAFETY FEATURES.**

VERTICAL BLINDS with a WAND control.

PERFECT FIT Pleated & Venetian Blinds with a "Figure of 8" operation.

PERFECT FIT Roller Blinds.

PANEL BLINDS with a WAND Control.

ROLLER BLINDS which are SPRING operated.

SENSES roller blinds with the "soft rise" mechanism.

ALL ELECTRICALLY OPERATED BLINDS.

**THE FOLLOWING BLINDS WILL NEED TO CONFORM TO SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.**

ROLLER BLINDS with a SIDEWINDER. The use of 2 x "Easy break" connectors and a chain drop which comes no nearer than 60cm off the floor. In this case a chain tidy is not required but we would recommend that one is fitted. A continuous loop chain may also be used but this must not come nearer the floor than 150cm (5 ft) and in this case a CHAIN TIDY must be fitted.

SENSES ROLLER BLIND with a SIDEWINDER. As for a standard roller blind.

VISION BLIND. These blinds can now only be made with a continuous loop system which will mean that the maximum length of the control chain will be limited by the height restriction of 150cm above the floor with a CHAIN TIDY fitted.

It is IMPORTANT to point out that if the FITTING HEIGHT is NOT specified it will NOT BE POSSIBLE to manufacture a vision blind.

VERTICAL BLINDS with standard controls - the controls may not come nearer the floor than 150cm (5 ft) and a CHAIN TIDY must be fitted.

ROMAN BLINDS. These inherently require a continuous loop to be used because of the geared control - this loop cannot be nearer the ground than 150cm (5 ft) and a CHAIN TIDY must be fitted. The blind also has safety features on the back of the blind through which the lift cords pass and these are designed to become "unclipped" if put under undue stress.

PANEL BLIND with a cord control. The cord cannot be nearer the ground than 150cm (5 ft) and a CHAIN TIDY must be fitted.

VENETIAN BLINDS. Standard cords must not be nearer the ground than 150cm (5 ft) when the blind is in the down position and the lift cords must have a "Cord Consolidator". When the blind is raised a CLEAT must have been fitted no nearer the ground than 150cm (5 ft) so that the excess cord can be wound around it when the blind is raised up. An additional cord cleat will need to be fitted for blinds that have cord operated tilt mechanisms.

**PERFECT FIT VENETIAN BLINDS.** These blinds can now only be made with a "figure of 8" mode of operation - a freehanging venetian blind in a perfect fit frame will no longer be possible.

**PLEATED BLINDS.** Same requirements as for a standard venetian blind.

**WOVEN WOOD BLINDS.** Only the Roman style blind will be available now (the roll-up type cannot meet the safety requirements). The same limitations on the lift cords will apply as for the standard venetian blind.

### **PLEASE NOTE**

#### **IF YOU DO NOT GIVE US THE INSTALLATION HEIGHT**

If the drop of the blind is less than 2500mm the controls cannot be made longer than 1000mm for a continuous loop operation or a blind using lift cords. For blinds with a "chain break" cord then the maximum length of the cord will be 2/3rd of the drop. This could mean that if you had a blind which was some distance off the ground this may mean that the customer might have some difficulty in reaching the controls.

If the drop of the blind is greater than 2500mm then the controls can be equal to the drop less 1500mm.

#### **IF YOU DO GIVE US THE INSTALLATION HEIGHT**

The controls can be any length you require as long as they do not come nearer than 1500mm from floor (but see below for "easy break" cords) and safety clips or cleats will need to be installed to keep the cords/chains from hanging loosely.

The above rule is modified for blinds where it is possible to include "easy-break" connectors in the controls chain. In these cases the control chain can be ANY LENGTH as long as it does not come nearer to the floor than 60cm (24"). This will apply to roller blinds in particular but if the fitting height is NOT specified then the restrictions mentioned above will have to be applied.

These regulations are applicable in any establishment where children may have access at any time and include obvious places like domestic homes, schools, clinics and businesses where there are no restrictions on children. In places where children are NEVER going to be present at any time then these safety regulations do not apply but we would recommend that any installations are discussed with the customer. As yet there does not seem to be any recommended waiver form being suggested but such a requirement would be advisable to cover yourself against anything which may happen in the future which should involve a child being injured.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT A CUSTOMER CANNOT DICTATE THAT THEY DO NOT WANT ANY OF THE SAFETY FEATURES MENTIONED ABOVE TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN A DOMESTIC ESTABLISHMENT, EVEN IF THERE ARE NO CHILDREN OR LIKELY TO BE ANY CHILDREN, PRESENT. THEY CANNOT SIGN ANY WAIVER TO PROTECT YOU FROM ANY FUTURE ACTION - THE LEGISLATION IS QUITE SPECIFIC ON THIS.**