

## SECOND SESSION

### Equipment and systems

#### **New French Decree (n° 2007-737, of May 7, 2007)**

Companies dealing with CFCs and/or HCFCs in France have to declare their activity and must be registered in the governmental offices locally (préfecture). This point was stated in a decree of Dec. 7, 1992, amended on June 30, 1998.

This decree was widely used by the European Union when it drafted the text what was to become the regulation CEE 2037-2000, adopted in 2000. Quite understandingly, this regulation goes a bit further, as did the special regulation on f-gases (fluorinated gases) n° 842-2006, adopted in 2006.

Consequently the French decree of 1992 had to be updated, a need that had been emphasised since the 80ies by the AFF, which had been requested by the ministry to give a hand to check the files presented by the companies, for equipment and staff training.

Several drafts for the new decree were discussed and mentioned in “industria & formatione” and/or in the international sessions of the Centro Galileo in Milan in previous years.

It is not an easy task to get a text with solutions adapted both to large plants and to automotive air conditioning as well as to small home devices.

Eventually, the decree was signed on May 7 by the 8 most concerned ministers and published on May 8 in the Journal officiel of the French Republic.

It substitutes the currently compulsory « inscription en préfecture » with a compulsory « attestation de capacité », that is to be delivered by private « organismes agréés », after examination of their equipment and staff ability. A big difference is that these organisms can (and have to) visit the companies, while previously only file assessment was possible.

The attestation is delivered for five years; it can be suppressed in case of offense to regulations. During the 5 years, so as to keep it valid, the company must declare how much refrigerant it has handled.

Refrigerant can be sold or delivered only to companies with a certificate.

The decree calls for five application texts (arrêtés d'application); one of those was published the same day as the decree. The five texts deal with:

- how containment is to be checked,
- what kind of information is to be given by companies and how,
- how the attestation is to be delivered,
- which professional training and/or competence is requested from the staff,
- how the organisms in charge of delivering attestations are accredited for that function.

Transitory measures are determined for companies that have been “inscrites en préfecture” already and for those that handle equipment with less than 2 kg of fluid, until July 4, 2009, the time when the decree must be fully enforced.

#### **Ammonia (NH3)**

In France, discussion on ammonia use is still controversial. The subject is on the agenda of the “Conseil National du Froid” every year, with new topics and progress every time.

Close relation has been established between the ad-hoc AFF commission and the department in charge, about such topics as:

- statistics on accidents: all accidents/incidents in any plant that “is likely to include ammonia systems” is recorded in a special public file, would NH3 be concerned in the event or not and, even, be present or not. Files on these events are sent to the AFF commission so as to check whether the report is clear on this point and to prepare decisions as to avoid risks;
- authorization/declaration: depending on the weight of NH3 it contains, a new system has to be either authorized or only declared. A minimal distance between the plant and property limits is fixed. Discrepancies between the two systems had to be studied so as not to limit with no reason the use of NH3 when it is a good solution.

Efforts to reduce the mass of NH3 in the plants have also been successful.