

# WEEE and RoHS

## Interim BCA position

*Disclaimer: Due to delays within the European Commission, a number of minor details that could affect the final position for cables remain to be clarified. The position given below therefore represents the understanding of the British Cables Association as at the date shown below. As and when additional clarification becomes available, this position will be updated accordingly.*

1. European Directives for Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment (RoHS) and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) were signed on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2003. They are respectively Directive 2002/95/EC (RoHS) and Directive 2002/96/EC (WEEE). The two Directives are inter-related in respect of a common understanding of scope but not in any other aspects.
2. The producer responsibility financial obligations arising from the WEEE Directive are expected to come into force from June 2006 in the UK, but the exact date still remains uncertain. It is, however, certain that from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2006 that the legal limits for the hazardous substances must be in place and complied with across the whole of the European Single Market.
3. WEEE outlines the type of equipment that falls within its scope. Amongst other things such equipment is restricted to that rated up to and including 1000 V a.c. (1500 V d.c). WEEE also describes other electrical items that are classed as components not equipment. Cables are classed as components, though this has yet to be clarified in any EC publication.
4. For WEEE the consequence of classification as a component is that the requirement for collection and disposal at end-of-life (producer responsibility) is covered by that for the whole equipment. Cables do not require separate return and collection.
5. RoHS applies to equipment falling within eight of the ten categories that comprise the scope of WEEE. The European Commission has published the limits for relevant substances (lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium and two families of brominated flame retardants – PBBs and PBDEs) in Decision 2005/618/EC. Cable manufacturers are taking the view that any cable that becomes part of designated equipment should not prevent that equipment from meeting the RoHS limits. Cable manufacturers will meet any RoHS limits that apply to their product as part of the obligation to comply with relevant regulations.