

Mandatory certification of electronics and IT goods from April 3, 2013

Government has prohibited manufacture, import, storage or sale of electronics and IT products that have not been registered with the Bureau of Indian Standards. The order specifies 15 electronic products in the first phase

By Srabani Sen

In order to strengthen the quality assessment procedure for electronic products and services, a mechanism will be put in place by April this year, to develop and mandate standards and certification procedures.

The Electronics and Information Technology Goods (Requirements for Compulsory Registration) Order, 2012, notified by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) will come into force on April 3, 2013. It means that no manufacturing, import, storage or sale of electronics products can be done without registering with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). The order specifies 15 electronic and IT products in the first phase that should be mandatorily registered with BIS, and meet specified safety standards. These products include video games, laptops/notebooks/tablets, plasma/LCD/LED televisions, microwave ovens, printers, scanners, telephone answering machines, electronic musical systems, set-top boxes, wireless keyboards, etc.

The scheme also provides that the electronic goods of different sizes, ratings, varieties, etc, will be grouped and may be granted series approval for a set of products based on testing representative models. DeitY will approve such series of products. This will obviate the need for every single model of the same series to be registered.



DeitY and BIS will randomly select samples of registered electronic goods to ascertain whether these goods conform to the specified standards. Electronic goods have to be tested by BIS-approved testing laboratories.

"As the date of implementation approaches, frenetic activity is seen for getting the products registered. DeitY is also gearing up to cater to the needs of the industry, and to ensure successful implementation of the order in time," says Dr Ajay Kumar, joint secretary, DeitY.

Self-registration for the first time

Usually, all standards in the country are implemented through the licence provisions of the BIS Act. This is the first time that a standards regime which provides for self-registration, as against a licence, will be implemented. "Self-registration provides a greater sense of responsibility on the industry, and the regulation of the government becomes less. Companies themselves would get their

products tested and will show that they comply with the required standards. I am sure that the industry and the importing community will rise to the occasion and show that they are able to fulfil the responsibility that has been entrusted

to them under the self-registration scheme," Dr Ajay Kumar has been quoted in DeitY newsletter.

NEED FOR STANDARDS

From the domestic manufacturing perspective

- Goods need to meet global quality standards to compete with imports
- Exports need to meet global quality/safety standards

From the imports perspective

- Curbs inflow of sub-standard/spurious/unsafe products
- Curbs unfair industry practices like very low pricing or the sale of unbranded products
- Greater safety of the Indian consumer

Certification firms gear up

In the meantime, certification companies like the German safety certification firm TUV Rheinland are gearing up to serve electronics and IT clients in India, to help them meet the April 3 deadline for mandatory registration of products with BIS. 