

Lead Free and RoHS Compliant • • • What we are doing

It appears that there is still some sense to the environmental edicts being handed down from the governments around the world. I have expressed my concern to many of you about the RoHS directive banning the use of cadmium in electrical and electric products. Over the years silver cadmium oxide (AgCdO) contacts have proven to be the best contacts for high current, inductive and high inrush loads and the prospect of AgCdO contacts being prohibited was frightening. We were preparing to recommend to our customers that they use two types of relays. One type for products to ship to Europe and relays with AgCdO contacts for use in US products.

This month the world got brighter. The following excerpt was published. Cadmium for use in electrical contacts has been exempted from the RoHS ban. For at least the next 4 years (exemptions are to be reviewed every 4 years) relays and switches will be allowed to have cadmium in contacts.

TAC votes on RoHS Exemptions

RoHS Directive Exemptions

ERA Technology presented the results of their study on the RoHS Directive exemptions to the TAC in October 2004.

Following their December Meeting the TAC voted on and adopted the draft Commission Decision amending the list of exemptions in the Annex of the RoHS Directive, subject to formal legal notification.

The draft amendments to the Annex are as follows –

Item 7 points 1, 2 and 3 of the Annex are replaced by:

- Lead in high melting point solders (i.e. lead based solders containing 85% by weight or more lead)
- Lead in solders for servers, storage array systems, network infrastructure equipment for switching, signalling, transmission as well as network management for telecommunications

Item 8 is replaced by:

Cadmium and its compounds in electrical contacts and cadmium plating except for applications banned under Directive 91/338/EEC (1) amending Directive 76/769/EEC (2) relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations.

With this exemption now in place, we only have to worry about the lead in the solder that is in the relays. This amount is quite small and can be replaced with lead free solder at a minimal cost. For most of the relays this will amount to just a penny or two.

Picker Components plans to start converting a major portion of our product line over to lead free RoHS compliant product as we order new stock. We will also be asking each customer if they desire RoHS compliant relays.

At first we were thinking of keeping our part numbering system the same and just using the date codes on the relays to tell if they were compliant or not. After some thought, it became obvious we needed to do something in the part number since we, our distributors and our customers need to be able to tell at a glance whether the relay is RoHS compliant.

We have settled on a **-X** at the end of the relay part number to signify that the relay is RoHS compliant. For example, the non-RoHS part number PTRH-1A-24S-1 would become PTRH-1A-24S-1-X for the RoHS compliant part. As time progresses, some relay families will automatically be RoHS compliant, this will be clearly stated in the data sheet and the **-X** will be dropped.

This is a big relief for us, as we only want to sell the best relay for each of our customer's applications. We will gradually revise the part numbering system on our data sheets to show the addition of the **-X** but in the mean time, please be aware that it is available on all of our relays. Please feel free to make copies of this newsletter for your customers.

Rest Regards, Sell Relays,

Bill Bratly

Picker Components Inc.