

VDMA

Press Information

Materials Handling and Logistics Systems

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Market Surveillance Authorities Clamp Down on Unsafe Products at CeMAT

More than 50 exhibits from the industrial trucks segment did not meet the requirements of the European directives regarding machine safety, exhaust emissions and noise emissions. That was the result of an inspection conducted by the VDMA Materials Handling and Logistics Systems sector association at the CeMAT 2011.

The information collected during the inspection was turned over to the Trade Supervisory Office in Hannover for further investigation. On the days that followed, the officials made rounds at the trade fair in their function as market surveillance enforcement authorities and confirmed the violations found by the VDMA. However, the sheer number of non-compliant products prevented the market surveillance authorities from conducting a complete inspection or including all exhibitors. Several of the manufacturers were confronted with their product violations and some of them now have to provide further information in order to avoid sanctions.

Sealed, tamperproof signs had to be affixed to some exhibits. By informing visitors that the products were not in conformance with regulations, the signs were intended to at least protect potential buyers from becoming involved in the illegal operation of such products in Europe. The Trade Supervisory Office has affirmed that it will investigate and follow up on all information it receives after the trade fair as well.

Sascha Schmel, from the Industrial Trucks product group of the VDMA, expressed concerns despite the successful mission: “Both the quality and the number of the violations are alarming. However, it did not surprise us that, at least to our knowledge, the majority of the violations were found in connection with imported products from manufacturers that only recently entered the European market or are planning to do so. Since non-European manufacturers also have access to all of the directives and standards in order to meet the legal requirements, the only motive could be short-term financial success or entry into the market with the tacit acceptance and knowledge that the products violate the applicable regulations and standards. Those established manufacturers that also use non-European development and production facilities for some or all of their products show that such methods are simply not necessary.” Peter Günther, Managing Director of the Materials Handling and Logistics Systems Sector Association, sees both the good and bad sides: “On the one hand, we should not downplay the fact that we effectively and successfully initiated action by the Market Surveillance authorities at the trade fair. The authorities involved definitely accomplished a lot within the extent of their means and capabilities. When measured by the requirements of the legislators and above all, by the number of apparent violations, however, you would have expected a much larger task force. At this point, it is also important to emphasize that the mission was only carried out at the initiative of the VDMA and was limited to the industrial truck segment.

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Verband Deutscher Maschinen-
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It is obvious that there is a blatant imbalance between the legislators' intention to regulate and the ability to enforce. The VDMA will remain in contact with the relevant authorities, offering support as needed and urging punishment of any known violations. On their side, politicians need to urgently reconsider this matter and increase market surveillance capacities in the future instead of diminishing them."

Do you have any questions? Sascha Schmel, Technical Manager of the Industrial Trucks product group at the VDMA Materials Handling and Logistics Systems Sector Association, will be glad to answer them. Telephone: +49 69 6603-1505.

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