Retroreflective Sign Face Sheetings
REMA Information Bulletin

Introduction:

Retroreflective sheeting is used in many ways to enhance visibility and legibility although the main uses fall into two areas, signing and vehicle markings (including vehicle number plates).
This bulletin relates to usage on signs – in particular, road traffic signs.
Since their first use in the UK in the 1940's, retroreflective traffic signs, incorporating retroreflective sign face sheeting, have become an essential traffic safety measure.
Retroreflective traffic signs fulfil a very important function in providing warnings, guidance and information to drivers in conditions of darkness as well as poor visibility.

Definition:

Retroreflective sign face sheeting may be defined as material which when used on traffic signs considerably enhances visibility and legibility during conditions of darkness by reflecting the light from vehicle headlights back to the driver

Types of Retroreflective Sign Face Sheeting:

Enclosed Lens (also known as Engineer Grade): The first type of material to be introduced and which uses tiny spherical glass beads to provide retroreflectivity. These materials have the lowest levels of performance (brightness).
Encapsulated Lens: The second generation of materials, also utilising glass beads, but with improved technology to provide intermediate levels of performance.
Microprismatics: The latest generation of materials which use microscopic corner cube reflectors to provide retroreflectivity. These materials typically have the highest levels of performance.

Regulations:

The legal requirements for traffic signs are contained in the UK regulations which are the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRGD). This latest version of the regulations came into force on January 31st 2003.
The TSRGD 2002 prescribes the designs and conditions of use for traffic signs to be lawfully placed on or near roads in England, Scotland and Wales.

Guidance:

Know Your Traffic Signs – published by the Department for Transport (DfT) and available at: www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tss/trafficsigns.pdf
The Traffic Signs Manual - gives guidance on the use of traffic signs and road markings prescribed by the TSRGD. The Traffic Signs Manual covers England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
The DfT is updating the manual and the revised edition relating to signing are:
Chapter 4 – Warning Signs
Chapter 7 – Design of Traffic Signs

Standards:

BS EN 12899-1: 2001 (2007 version will be published shortly) – Fixed, vertical road traffic signs. Fixed signs
BS 8408: 2005 – Road traffic signs. Testing and performance of microprismatic retroreflective sheeting materials. Specification
BS 8442: 2006 - Miscellaneous road traffic signs and devices. Requirements and test methods

REMA – Code of Practice

- To manufacture and/or supply compliant products
- To promote the use of compliant products in the market place
- To promote and improve awareness of applicable Standards and Best Practice
- To contribute to the development of good Standards and Regulations
- To conform to Ethical Practices
- To adhere to the REMA Code of Practice
- To support and promote REMA as an association

REMA:

The Retroreflective Equipment Manufacturers Association (REMA) was founded over 30 years ago and is the trade association and co-ordinated voices for manufacturers of retroreflective traffic safety products which are used mainly on the highways but also, for example, at airports and industrial sites.
All REMA members are required to follow the REMA Constitution as well as the REMA Code of Practice. This ensures that products supplied by REMA members conform to the latest Standards, Regulations and Legislation - A guarantee of quality.

Further Information:

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