

Information Sheet

May 2010

Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles (EAPCs) in Great Britain

Statement

This document provides general guidance and advice on the legislative requirements in Great Britain relating to Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles.

Every effort has been made to ensure that it is factually correct but recipients should check with the producers of this document if they have reason to believe any part is not correct or is now out of date.

General requirements

In GB, the EAPC Regulations¹ apply to certain bicycles, tandem bicycles or tricycles fitted with pedals by means of which they are capable of being propelled. For the regulations to apply, the motor assistance must be provided by an electric motor and not by an internal combustion engine. The electric motor must not be able to propel the machine when it is travelling at more than 15mph. Furthermore, the vehicle must also meet the following requirements:

Maximum kerbside weight (including batteries but without rider) shall not exceed

- Bicycle: 40 kg - Tandem Bicycle: 60 kg - Tricycle: 60 kg

Maximum continuous rated power output of the motor shall not exceed

- Bicycle: 200W - Tandem Bicycle: 250W - Tricycle: 250W

An EAPC which complies with the above is not considered to be a motor vehicle within the meaning of The Road Traffic Act 1988. As a result, it is not required to be registered, pay vehicle excise duty (road tax) or be insured as a motor vehicle. No EAPC may be ridden by anyone under the age of 14 years.

The Pedal Cycles (Construction and Use) Regulations² also specify requirements for EAPCs. These include a requirement to display a plate showing the manufacturer, the nominal voltage of the battery, and the continuous rated output of the motor.

Vehicles outside the scope of the GB Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles Regulations

A vehicle is not covered by the above exemption if it is outside the scope of the EAPC Regulations. This may be due to the motor power output, speed up to which power can be provided, weight, or that it does not have pedals by means of which the machine can be propelled. Consequently, it will need to be registered, insured and is subject to Vehicle Excise

¹ The Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles Regulations 1983 SI 1983/1168

² The Pedal Cycles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1983 SI 1983/1176

Duty (display a tax disc); the rider will need an appropriate driving licence and will have to wear an approved motorcycle safety helmet.

The requirements applicable to EAPCs outside the scope of the 1983 EAPC Regulations vary. Certain types, for example, those whose power exceeds 250 Watts may require either a European Certificate of Conformity (issued by the manufacturer as part of the “type approval” procedure) or an individual pre-registration assessment; others may be registered directly with DVLA.

Power assistance (Twist and Go)

A vehicle is **not** exempt from having either a European Certificate of Conformity or an individual pre-registration assessment if it is fitted with pedals and a motor that can provide power assistance at any time without the rider pedalling, or if the motor is not cut off automatically when the vehicle reaches 25km/h. However, if it is within the scope of the EAPC Regulations (see above), it still does not require registration, licensing or insurance.

‘Off Road’ Assistance

We are aware of some electric cycles that have a switch offering a temporary increase in top speed – often advertised as an ‘off road’ facility. When the switch is pressed the vehicle can be propelled by the motor at a speed greater than 15 mph. Vehicles with this feature fitted, in our opinion, do not comply with the GB EAPC Regulations. Vehicles and riders must comply with the appropriate motor vehicle requirements i.e. registration, driver/rider licensing, insurance, use of an approved helmet etc

Further Information

A note on legislation for Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles is annexed to this information sheet.

If you require any further information regarding the content of this information sheet, please contact the DfT at the address below:

Transport Technology and Standards
Department for Transport
Zone 2/05
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DR

Telephone: 020 7944 2091
Fax: 020 7944 2196
Email: TTS.enquiries@dft.gsi.gov.uk

NOTE: The information in this document is a summary of DfT’s understanding of what the law requires. However, ultimately the interpretation of the law is a matter for the courts based on individual facts of any particular case. You are therefore advised to consult the relevant legislation and, if necessary, seek independent advice.

Other relevant legislation

EAPCs may also need to comply with the following legislation, confirmation should be sought via the Department of Business Innovation and Skills www.bis.gov.uk or via local Trading Standards Departments <http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/advice/consumer-advice.cfm>

Low Voltage Directive:

The Electrical Equipment designed for use within certain Voltage Limits Directive 73/23/EEC (as amended) (commonly known as the Low Voltage Directive)

Electromagnetic Compatibility Directive:

The Electromagnetic Compatibility Directive 89/336/EEC (as amended).

Obtaining the Regulations and Directives

Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles

The Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles Regulations 1983 – Statutory Instrument (SI 1983 No.1168)

Pedal Cycles (Construction and Use) Regulations

The Pedal Cycles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1983 - Statutory Instrument (SI 1983 No. 1176)

Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations

The Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 2002 - Statutory Instrument (SI 2002 No.2742)

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2002/uksi_20022742_en.pdf

The Type Approval of two or three-wheel motor vehicles Directive

Directive 2002/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 March 2002 relating to the type-approval of two or three-wheel motor vehicles

If you would like to purchase printed copies, Statutory Instruments are available to purchase from TSO:

The Stationery Office

Tel: 0870 600 5522

TSO Orders/Post Cash Dept

online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

PO Box 29

Norwich

NR3 1GN

Alternatively you can consult consolidated versions such as “*The Encyclopaedia of Road Traffic Law and Practice*” published by Sweet and Maxwell. Such publications are continually updated and are available in most city reference libraries.

EU Directives can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/documents/directives/index_en.htm

(The above lists all Directives pertaining to road and agricultural vehicles)

UN-ECE Regulations can be found at: <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/wp29/wp29regs.html>

Paper copies of Directives can be ordered from TSO or from the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA): Tel: +44 (0)117 952 4178 / 4143 or email to: vista@vca.gov.uk