



Tax Talk – Minimum Energy Performance Standards and Labelling (MEPSL)

This week in TAX Talk, we discuss the **Minimum Energy Performance Standards and Labelling (MEPSL)**.

What is MEPSL?

MESPL is a programme implemented by the Government of Fiji to improve the energy efficiency of electrical appliances in Fiji.

Why has the MEPSL programme been implemented?

It has been demonstrated that appliance standards and labelling programmes provide the most effective and efficient energy management strategies.

The programme provides real economic and environmental benefits, including reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. It aims to demonstrate a reduction in climate change issues in the Pacific.

The Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (FRCS) is working closely with the Department of Energy (DOE) to achieve the smooth transition of the MEPSL programme.

When was MEPSL introduced in Fiji?

Energy Performance Standards and Labelling (MEPSL) in Fiji so that Appliance standards and labelling programs have demonstrated **Partnership**

The programme was established on a voluntary basis in 1996. In 2012 it became mandatory for all Household Refrigerators and Freezers imported into Fiji to comply with the relevant standards; i.e. Australia/New Zealand Standards (AS/NZS 4474.1 and AS/NZS 4474.2). This was in accordance with Section 2 of the Trade Standards (Household Electric Refrigerating Appliances) Order 2007, by the Government of Fiji.

What does this mean for importers?

Any household electric refrigerating appliances that does not comply with the Trade Standards (Household Electric Refrigerating Appliances) Order (LN 91 of 2007) as per the import compliance requirements stipulated under the Customs (Prohibited Import & Export) Regulations 1986

Schedule 5 Item Number 12. All importers need to seek prior approval from Department of Energy (DOE) to import any Household Refrigerators and Freezers into Fiji and only compliant appliances will be approved for import and use.

At Fiji's borders FRCS, in partnership with DOE, monitors the import of all household electric freezers and refrigerators into the country.

Permit to Import

As an importer, you must ensure that your import complies with the relevant standards, prior to importation. This can be confirmed by your suppliers and/ or DOE.

After this, you will need to lodge an application to import with DOE.

Retailers will need to submit applications on company letterhead, while individuals will need to obtain a form from DOE to submit their application.

How long will my application take and do I need to pay any fees??

It will require ten (10) working days to process your application, counting from the date it is received.

No fees are charged to lodge an application. The imported goods will be subject to inspection once they enter Fiji.

What is the Energy Rating Label?

The Energy Rating Label provides the consumer with information about the energy consumption of an appliance, relative to similar models. However, it does not provide any guarantee of appliance quality or durability.

Importation for purpose of retail

It is mandatory for all household Refrigerators and Freezers imported for the purpose of retail to have a correct **energy rating** affixed at the point of sale.

The energy rating labels must be clearly visible and not obscured. Products without labels are deemed non-compliant. If the product is not labeled or has an incorrect label, the retailer must rectify it before putting the product on display.

Registration of household refrigerators and freezers

If the product is not already registered with the relevant standards, then arrangements must be made with DOE for registration. The importer will need to submit a full test report, in accordance to the relevant standards and a sample of the energy rating label, together with the application.

The application will be rejected if any deficiencies are found and DOE will inform the importer in writing the reason or reasons for rejection.

Non-compliant Goods

If non-compliant household refrigerators and freezers are imported will be subject to detention from Customs referral to DOE, the importer will be required to return the goods to the supplier/exporter at the importer's expense. Failure to return the non-compliant goods within three months will result in the seizure, forfeiture & destruction of the non-compliant goods.

Disposable of Freezers

A total of 148 freezers were disposed in 2017. However, the number declined to only 23 in 2018 due to extensive awareness. The disposal process involves recovery of Gas/Refrigerant by a company with valid refrigerant storage permit and scrapping and disposal to the Naboro landfill.

The entire process is carried out under the supervision of officers from Department of Energy, Department of Environment and Ministry of Industry Trade and Tourism.

For further information or clarification, please visit our website www.fracs.org.fj or email us on info@fracs.org.fj.

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