



White Paper

Regulatory review – a health and safety pressure to lift?

October 2025



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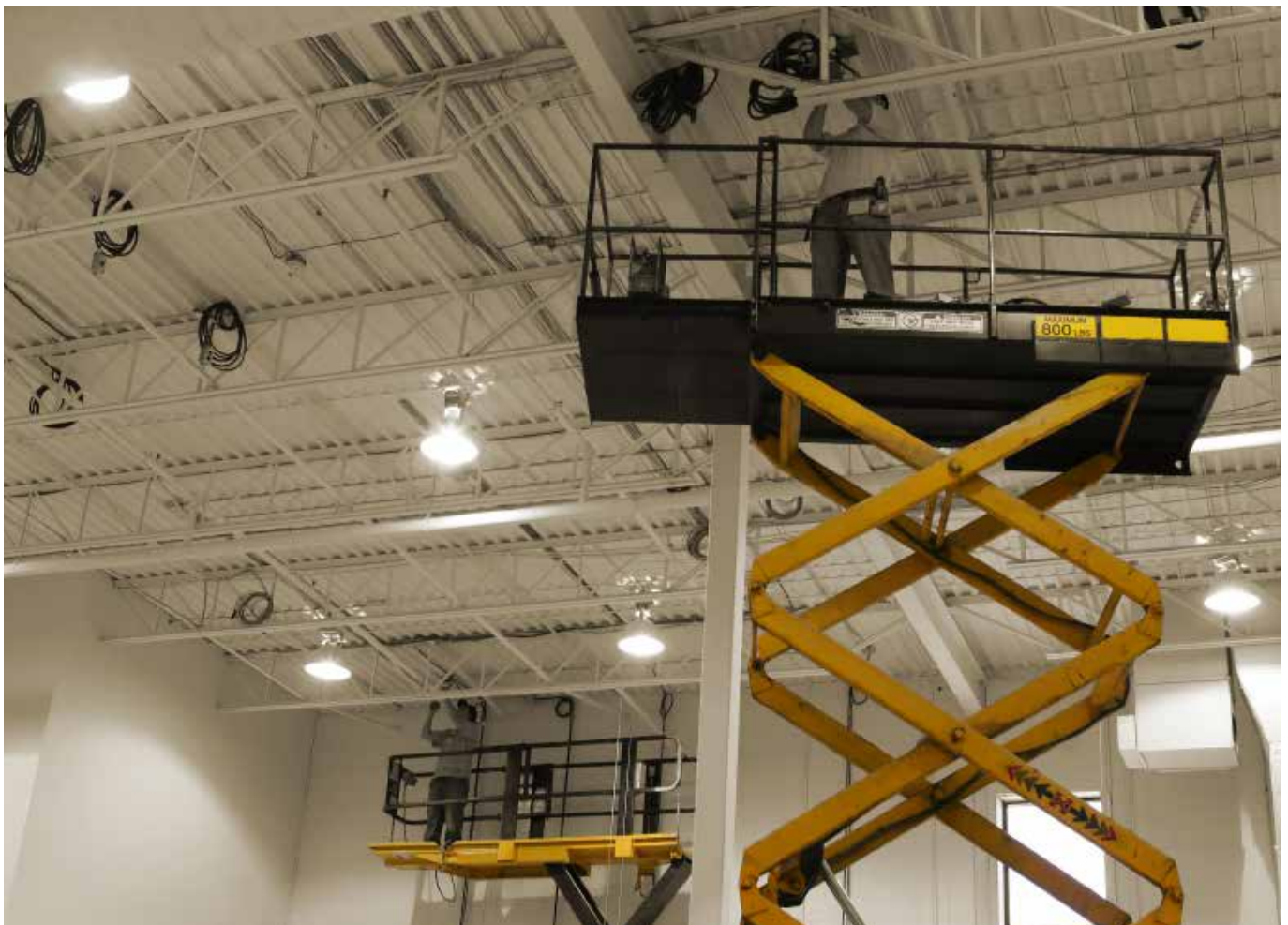
In an ebulletin of the 7th October 2025, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) raised a “[call for evidence on lifting equipment and pressure systems regulations](#)”.

With both regulations being relatively aged may be a review was not surprising, although as people may be aware, over the last 15 years we have had Lord Young, Lofstedt and REUL, to name but three look at the bigger health and safety picture and the regulations owned and enforced by HSE reduced by approx. 50%.

Our regulation must be meaningful, and it is always good to have a review process in place, but equally it has to be justified. So, what is the background to the request and what can we do/be doing?

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1. Background

Under the policy paper (updated last March) “New approach to ensure regulators and regulation support growth” the Government signalled an intention to:

- Tackle complexity and the burden of regulation;
- Reduce uncertainty across the regulatory system; and
- Challenge and shift excessive risk aversion in the system.

While accepting that “regulation protects individuals from public health risks” and “safeguards employees from harm at work, enabling a healthy and productive workforce”, it goes on to say:

“However, the current regulatory landscape is not functioning as effectively as it should. Our system now too often holds back growth and inhibits private sector investment. Whilst countries such as Singapore and Australia have continued to improve their regulatory systems, the UK has fallen behind. One of the clearest manifestations of this is the high associated administrative costs for businesses arising from activities such as filling out forms or from overly onerous and disproportionate reporting requirements.”

Specifically for health and safety regulation, the paper identifies:

“We will tackle instances where current approaches are unnecessarily limiting growth. This means working with regulators to identify specific opportunities where we can adapt practices whilst maintaining high standards across our economy.”

Included in the work will be:

- Consultations on chemical products and possible changes to the definitions under the Reporting Of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 2013; and
- A review of “older prescriptive legislation”, specifically the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations (PSSR) 2000 and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) “to identify and remove unnecessary regulatory burdens and identify potential changes to this legislation to reflect technological advances and reliability of work equipment.”

[New approach to ensure regulators and regulation support growth \(HTML\) - GOV.UK](#)



2. HSE call for evidence

The HSE call for evidence, as part of this process, is focused on PSSR and LOLER, closes on the 11th November 2025, and is asking for information to help determine “if the regulations remain proportionate and responsive to emerging technologies.”

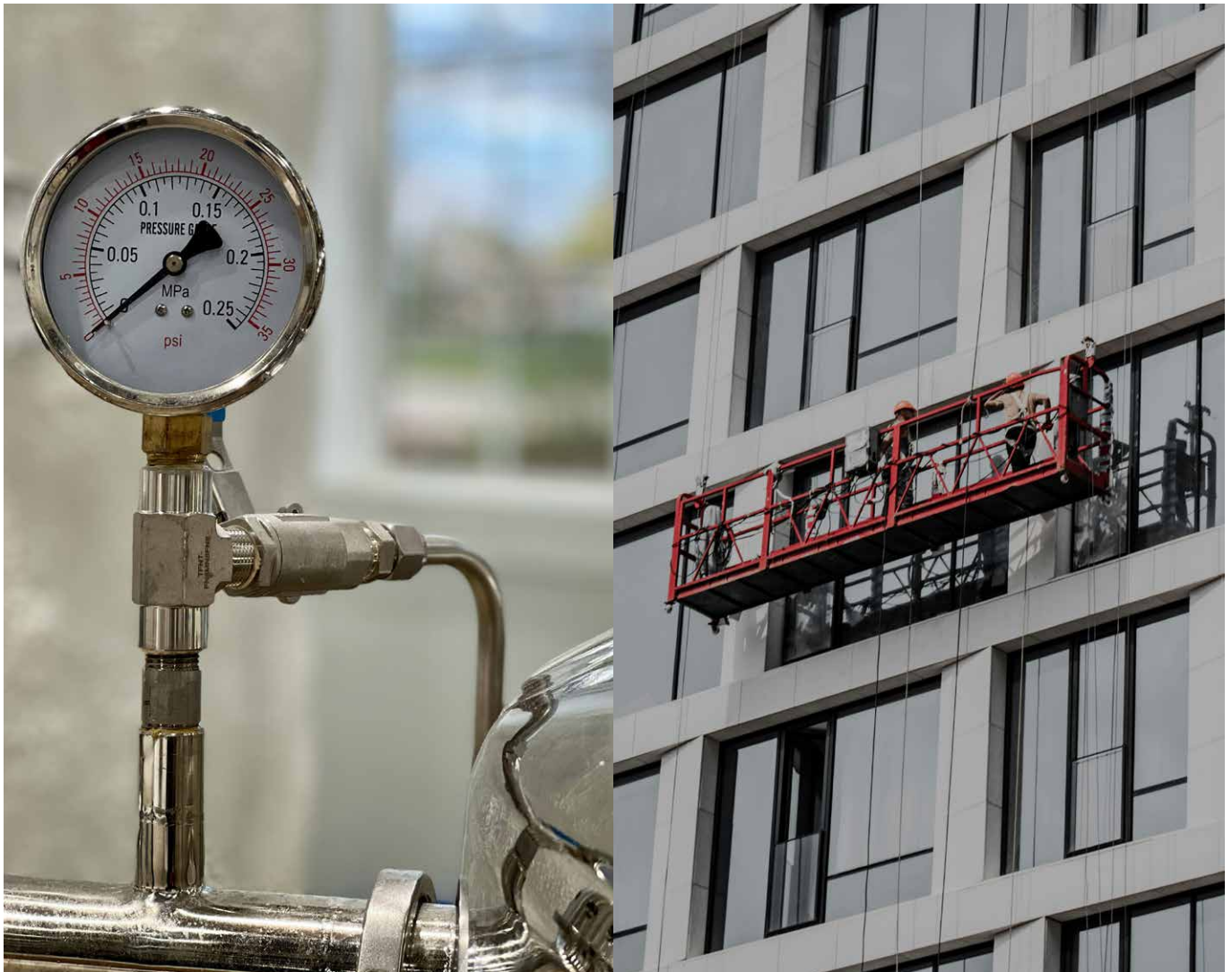
The work is targeting three particular aspects of the regulations, these being to:

- Gain an understanding if any aspects of the regulations impose administrative/financial burdens that do not clearly benefit risk reduction;
- Identify areas where the regulations may no longer be effective or outdated in reflect current practice or technological developments respectively; and
- Explore whether the regulations could be made better in terms of clarity and/or effectiveness.

Links to each of the call for evidence are:

[Pressure Safety Systems Regulations \(PSSR\) Call for Evidence \(CfE\) - Health and Safety Executive - Citizen Space](#)

[Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulation \(LOLER\) Call for Evidence \(CfE\) - Health and Safety Executive - Citizen Space](#)



3. Pressure systems and lifting operations/equipment management

PSSR and LOLER establish the frameworks for managing two distinct categories of workplace equipment. Both have been around for over 25 years, and both came into UK law while we were part of the EU.

The Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000

PSSR looks to prevent serious injury from the stored energy in pressure systems, which can include rigid vessels, pipework, and pipelines with protective devices. The regulations apply to systems containing 'relevant fluids' like steam, compressed gas above 0.5 bar, hot water above 110°C, and gas dissolved under pressure.

A primary requirement of PSSR is a "Written Scheme of Examination" (WSE). This must be produced by a competent person before a pressure system is first used and should detail the methods and frequency for and of examination and inspection of all relevant identified parts. The duty holder must ensure these examinations are conducted in accordance with the WSE, again by a competent person, and the reporting procedures of all (especially dangerous) defects.

Those responsible for these systems and owners of mobile systems have responsibilities, including providing suitable equipment, observing safe operating limits, ensuring protective devices are functional, maintaining the system, training staff, and keeping records of the WSE, examination reports, and any modifications.

[Pressure systems - HSE](#)

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998

LOLER place duties on people and companies who own, operate or have control over lifting equipment. A wide range of equipment is covered by the regulations including overhead cranes, patient hoists, cleaning cradle (and their suspension equipment), lifts (goods, passenger, vehicle, fork and tail) and accessories (chains, hooks, eyebolts, ropes, etc.).

LOLER requires that all equipment used for lifting is, suitably marked and subject to statutory periodic 'thorough examination' in many cases. Records must be kept of all thorough examinations.

Lifting equipment must be fit for purpose, appropriate for the task(s) being performed and in many cases clearly marked with its Safe Working Load (SWL). "Thorough examination" of the equipment is required before first use (with some exceptions), periodically (frequency depending on the equipment), and after exceptional events by a competent person. All lifting operations must be planned and supervised, with the plan's complexity reflecting the risk. A written report must be provided after each examination; records must be kept and any defects found must be reported to both the person responsible for the equipment and the relevant enforcing authority.

[Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations \(LOLER\) - HSE](#)

4. Points to ponder with the review

While each set of regulations covers a distinct area of work equipment, the overall process for both is very similar and recognisable to all competent workplace/health and safety practitioners. For example:

- **The competent person** - for both PSSR and LOLER, a competent person is needed, who must have the knowledge, experience, and training to perform examinations and make impartial judgments.
- **Comprehensive risk assessment** - the need to identify all relevant equipment and assess risks during installation, operation, and maintenance to determine control measures and inspection needs.
- **Scheduled and documented examinations** - maintain a strict examination schedules, systems to track dates and store records.
- **Training and competence management** – appropriately train and track employee authorisation, provide regular refresher training and updates as needed.
- **Emergency procedures** – have produced clear procedures for responding to equipment failure or potential lifting operation issues.
- **Maintenance and modification control** - have developed maintenance. Inspection and examinations plans and schedules. Properly plan, document, and review repairs and modifications by a competent person.
- **Audit and review** - regularly audit and review the system to assess effectiveness, compliance, and competent person performance.
- **Non-compliance** - failure to comply with either set of regulations can result in business disruption, potentially serious injury or death, prosecution, fines and reputational damage.

Having said that, the broad process is true for most health and safety-based compliance in the UK, following the risk-based principles of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. So, what about other regulations, PUWER for example?

There has been a degree of confusion between the application of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) and LOLER, and there is a level of overlap with both sets of regulations applying to work equipment and each placing duties on the installation and inspection of equipment. As the names suggest though, while PUWER applies to all work equipment, LOLER only applies to specific lifting equipment, operations and accessories.



Does this mean however there is the possibility of further regulations coming “into scope” following the initial evidence review?

In terms of complexity one of the main areas that could be reviewed is the frequency of inspection and examination, where both regulations having lists of equipment and timetables ranging for 6 months to potentially 5 years (risk and system/contents/use depending). Whereas this has produced an element of certainty for scheduling, it could be argued that a more risk and condition-based system may offer a more “cost effective” option. However, it could equally lead to the need for more investment to be able to demonstrate compliance or see greater risk taking in reducing controls and potentially safety.

In looking at enforcement, since the start of the year the HSE enforcement database identifies there have been at the time of writing in 2025:

- Approx. 60 enforcement notices under LOLER, of which 16% were immediate prohibition notices; and
- 10 enforcement notices under PSSR, all improvement notices.

With over 7,000 notices issued by HSE in total during 2023/24, these are a relatively small percentage (1%) of the overall total of breaches (not of course indicating in any way they were not serious). Are there other areas where activity could be better focussed for greater business and safety benefit?

Finally, it is for us as a profession and industry to support these initiatives and provide the evidence HSE and ultimately government need to make informed decisions on the future of our legislation and how we deliver compliance successfully to best effect for our organisations. So, take the opportunity to take part.



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