



ACI/190/14

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## **Cuts will allow sub-standard cable to go unchecked**

The Approved Cables Initiative is issuing its own warning to the electrical supply chain following Trading Standards' announcement that further budget cuts will leave the country open to an influx of dangerous and/or counterfeit goods.

Concerned by a Trading Standards Institute (TSI) announcement that budgets are set to be slashed by an average of 40% over the life of this parliament, the Approved Cables Initiative (ACI) says that the predicted 'influx' may include sub-standard, counterfeit and non-conforming cable. This is an issue the ACI has brought to the attention of industry, Government and the public for several years.

According to TSI's 2014 Workforce Survey, released in April, by 2016 most Trading Standards' services in England and Wales will have been cut and some services will have stopped – which it predicts will have a detrimental effect upon consumer rights, consumer safety and the health of legitimate businesses.

The ACI believes that it is important to support Trading Standards in communicating this key message, to ensure the maintenance of an effective service.

Peter Smeeth of the Approved Cables Initiative said: "The ACI has been working with Trading Standards since 2010 to highlight issues of sub-standard cable. We are at a loss to understand where business and the public will go if this service cannot support them.

"As an Initiative, the ACI has previously been directed by Department for Business Innovation and Skills to work with Trading Standards to manage sub-standard cable issues. However, our concern is that the level of service that is needed to keep on top of this issue just isn't going to be available in the future.

"This also justifies our continued campaign for changes to legislation to support the cable supply industry and public from sub-standard and defective cable products. We believe that by allowing such cuts the Government is in danger of appearing to be merely paying lip service to the sub-standard cable problem."

The ACI is currently lobbying for new legislation which would ensure that only cables that fully comply with British, European or International standards and that carry a third party certification are manufactured for sale, offered for sale, distributed or installed in the UK.

It believes that without this change, the UK faces the prospect of further sub-standard cable entering the market which will have a detrimental effect upon the public, business and British cable manufacturers.

Part of the drive for legislative change includes a call for better examination of products at the point or place of entry where Trading Standards are active and the ACI has already received cross-party support for its campaign.

Commenting on its concerns, CEO of Trading Standards Institute Leon Livermore said: "The nature of Trading Standards is to serve as a watchdog for businesses and consumers which means its value is often overlooked until service are gone. Trading Standards are an invaluable service and we are reaching a level where further cuts are unsustainable."

Since the last Workforce Survey was conducted in 2009, Trading Standards staffing levels have fallen by approximately 45%.

The ACI is an established name in the campaign against non-conforming and substandard cables in the UK market. Set up as an industry-wide campaign in 2010 with regulator support, it aims to educate and inform the cable supply industry and other stakeholders of problems encountered with sub-standard, defective and unsafe data, telecom and electric cable.

If you have any concerns regarding sub-standard, defective or faulty cable, the Approved Cables Initiative can be contacted on 0208 946 6978/07973 636688 or you can email [info@aci.org.uk](mailto:info@aci.org.uk) . For further information about the ACI campaign visit [www.aci.org.uk](http://www.aci.org.uk)

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