

TOPAS

Traffic Open Products and Specifications

TOPAS flyer for purchasers

As a purchaser of traffic control and information systems, I want to be confident that what I'm buying will do the job I want it to do. Some of this confidence comes from knowing that products have been designed for that purpose and that they've been tested to verify that they meet relevant technical requirements. The question is, how can I and other purchasers be assured that prospective suppliers are offering equipment designed and tested in this way? The answer is, by buying TOPAS registered equipment.

TOPAS has been developed with users and industry, and with support from government and the devolved administrations, to offer suppliers and purchasers specifications for traffic control and information systems. These specifications are based on the TR2500 series Standards previously maintained by Highways England, and equipment Type Approved against these Standards have largely been registered against the equivalent TOPAS specification. In this way TOPAS registration may be considered a replacement for Type Approval, although registration is voluntary and purchasers are free to buy other products. Type Approval remains in place for equipment installed prior to 2016 when the current Traffic Sign Regulations and General Directions withdrew this requirement for new installations.

The advantage of TOPAS registration for purchasers is that it provides assurance that a product has been designed to a specification developed collaboratively by users and industry to do the intended job. In this way TOPAS products represent best practice agreed jointly by representatives of users in the form of the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport, Traffic Systems Group (TSG), and industry in the form of the Association of Road Traffic Safety and Management (ARTSM).

As well as enabling purchasers to be confident that they're buying a product that has been designed for that purpose, for a product to be TOPAS registered it must be independently verified by a qualified technical assessor as having been tested against the specification. In this way I can be confident in choosing a TOPAS

registered product that it's been designed, tested and independently verified as being fit for purpose.

A note of caution

TOPAS registration is a product assurance system. Users must ensure traffic control and information systems are used only in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act and the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016. Purchasers must ensure equipment complies with all legislation and placing unlawful equipment on a public road may expose the purchaser to litigation in the event of an incident.