

was originally HSE 505/1, renumbered to 605/48

## **STORAGE RACKS FOR CABLE DRUMS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1 This document contains internal guidance which has been made available to the public. The information may not be directly applicable in all circumstances and any queries should be directed to the appropriate enforcing authority.

### **BACKGROUND**

2 Accidents, including a fatality, have occurred where cable drums are stored on racking systems from which cable is drawn off for supply.

3 Rack storage is commonly found in warehouses and wholesale outlets. Drums may be up to one metre in diameter and weigh more than a tonne. Drums are supported on solid steel bars running through drum centres; trunnion brackets bolted to the front uprights of the racking system support the bars.

4 Cable is drawn off and rewound using measuring and reeling machines which are often electrically powered, portable and foot-pedal operated. A fatal accident occurred when an operator was operating a measuring and reeling machine with his back towards the racking. Cable snagged on a drum and pulled the racking over.

### **PRECAUTIONS**

5 Racking systems should be soundly constructed and rated for the maximum loads anticipated during normal use. To ensure good stability, cross-bracing at the ends of racking should be considered. The stability of racks in line may be improved by joining them by connecting bolts or clamps. No more than 3 tiers of drums should be stored.

6 Racking systems should be located on firm, level ground and securely fixed to the floor. Fixing bolts and anchorages should be sufficiently strong to withstand forces generated by cables snagged on drums, so that if they do snag, the motor of the measuring and reeling machine stalls and disengages its clutch.

7 Drums should be checked to identify potential snags such as the inner end of the cable protruding through a drum flange.

8 Measuring and reeling machines should be fitted with suitable load-limiting devices such as slipping clutches.

9 Operators should be able to observe both the racking and the meter on the measuring and reeling machine from their normal operating positions.

10 Racking should be regularly inspected and maintained. Damage from fork-lift trucks is common.

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