



EU Fastener Import Licensing Replaced



EU Prior Surveillance Import Licensing on fasteners and other steel and aluminium products expired on 16th May 2020. The regime is replaced by monitoring of actual import data collected from Member States' customs authorities.

Commission Implementing Regulation 2016/670 of 29th April 2016 introduced prior Union surveillance of imports of certain iron and steel products originating in certain third countries. Amongst the products cited in the regulation were fourteen CN codes for fasteners, covering the majority of carbon steel, but not stainless steel, threaded fastener products including nuts. Commission Implementing Regulation 2018/640 introduced similar surveillance of certain aluminium products.

Article 6 of both regulations stated: "This Regulation shall apply from the day following its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union until 15th May 2020." The surveillance regimes therefore expired on 16th May 2020 and importers are no longer required to apply for import licences on the products cited in the regulations.

The European Commission did not make any announcement about the expiry of import licensing but import licensing and customs authorities in some EU states issued confirmatory notices to importers on 15th May.

The European Commission has replaced import licensing, which effectively captured intentions to import, with a new monitoring system based on actual import data transmitted by Member States' customs authorities. The monitoring reports are updated on a monthly basis, covering the steel and aluminium products previously subject to prior surveillance, with the addition of products subject to US Section 232 measures. The new system has been introduced within the framework of Article 56(5) of the Union Customs Code, by which the release for free circulation or the export of goods may be made subject to surveillance. Announcing the new system, the Commission said: "It will respond better to the needs of the industrial sectors concerned and is completely transparent. The new system is based on import statistics available two weeks after the actual imports, thus considerably earlier than the official Eurostat data. It offers a better assessment of the import situation as compared to the previous system, which was based on import intentions, not actual imports." Further information and the first monthly data summaries are available on the Commission's website: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/siglbo/post-surveillance>

The original implementation of the prior surveillance regime proved extremely complex with some EU states able to rapidly implement highly automated systems and others using bureaucratic and often painfully slow manual reporting methods. The integrity of the data was also questionable, as it captured intention to import rather than what was eventually imported.

The European Fastener Distributor Association made regular submissions to the European Commission, arguing that the licensing regime created a significant and unnecessary administrative and financial burden for European fastener importers. EFDA succeeded in getting the Commission to raise the threshold for licensing of consignments of each CN code from 2,500kg to 5,000kg net weight, but not in having the system eliminated.

LISI Group Becomes Sole Owner of US Company TERMAX LLC



LISI Group has agreed to acquire the remaining 49% of the TERMAX LLC equity. This transaction, initially planned for the first quarter 2021, enables LISI Group to become the sole owner of TERMAX LLC through its US subsidiary, LISI Holding North America.

LISI Group is a global industrial group specialising in the manufacture of high value-added assembly and component solutions for the aerospace, automotive and medical industries. Thanks to the commitment of its 11,171 employees in 13 countries over four continents, LISI generated sales of €1.7 billion in 2019.

François Liotard, chief executive officer of LISI AUTOMOTIVE, explains: "With TERMAX LLC, LISI AUTOMOTIVE has extended its global footprint in clip-fastening solutions in a lasting manner. The commercial and industrial synergies between our Clipped Solutions Business Group and Termax will continue to bear fruit. They will allow us to bring to a wider customer base the best development and production capabilities to offer innovative solutions in the areas of weight reduction, electrification and autonomous vehicle equipment."

Effective as from 30th June 2020, the transaction does not have a material impact on the LISI Group financial statements in which TERMAX and the whole of the corresponding debt have been consolidated since 1st November 2017.



LOCKHEED MARTIN and LISI AEROSPACE Sign Agreement

LISI AEROSPACE, part of the LISI Group, has signed its first long-term supply contract with Lockheed Martin, for F-35 fasteners. The award covers years 2020 – 2022, with three one-year options to 2025, at an estimated (six-year) total value of US\$60 million (€53.3 million).

The entire contract will be supplied by LISI AEROSPACE's North American platform and strengthen the company's position as a major supplier of fasteners for aerospace and military aviation.



fischer FireStop Used at Istanbul Airport

Numerous fischer FireStop products have been used in the construction of the largest airport in the world, Istanbul Airport, to protect lives and infrastructure in the event of a fire. The range helps to prevent fire, smoke, and toxic gases from spreading in the event of a fire. All bushings for MEP applications (mechanical, electrical and sanitary work) such as cables and ventilation systems, as well as all types of pipes and lines were sealed with fischer FireStop products.

fischer states the products installed to seal off the lead-through openings include the FCPS panel system. The FCPS is designed to provide up to four hours of space and two hours of temperature resistance. Other products used include the one component, water-based acrylic emulsion fischer FiAM and the graphite-based fischer FiGM. The FiAM guarantees up to five hours of space closure; whereas FiGM foams under high pressure, expanding up to 20 times its own volume.

The fischer fire protection wrap FiPW for wrapping non-metallic pipes and ducts offers up to four hours of fire resistance and was also used along with the two component polyurethane foam FBS-EN and the fischer FFSC seal. FBS-EN is particularly suitable for use in openings that are difficult to access for electrical feedthroughs; and the FFSC seal is a formulated gypsum-based mortar suitable for filling voids and gaps in walls and floors – offering resistance and insulation for up to four hours.

Istanbul Airport currently handles around 90 million passengers a year and when construction is complete the passenger capacity is expected to more than double to over 200 million a year. Six runways on a total construction area of approximately 76.5 million square metres are intended to enable passengers to be transported safely to their destinations.

“Because this is a large-scale project with enormous HVAC systems, most of the ducts through fire protection walls and ceilings are built on a considerable scale, particularly the pipes and ventilation systems. Innovative conductor lines and large metallic and flammable pipes presented an enormous challenge in finding a technical solution, but we were able to successfully plan and implement them,” states Ant Güngör, technical marketing manager at the Turkish subsidiary of fischer.

fischer had to supply systems that have been tested, approved according to European standards, but also adhered to project specific requirements. “Construction progressed quickly on this prestigious project, which is why a reliable partner was required for its fire protection. We began supporting the project at an early stage and helped the client plan the FireStop solutions and provided on-site support,” stated Constantin Wiegert, product and market manager at fischer.



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Double-Gold Machinery Accessory Factory founded in 1987. It is one of the earliest private enterprises engaging in production of various standard fasteners such as retaining rings for bores, E-rings, wave washers, and spring washers, etc. We have gained the certification of ISO9001:2015 International Production Management System, ROHS2.0 Environmental Protection Certification, and the certification of ISO14001:2015 Environmental Management System. Double-Gold Factory holds the concept of innovation promoting values and always put a premium on investment and updating of equipment. Therefore, in 2008, we imported the most advanced equipment of controlled atmosphere heat treatment (Austempering) from Switzerland. As a professional manufacturer in standard fasteners industry, we have endless pursuit of quality. We are making efforts to maintaining the highest level of raw materials selection, employee cultivation, products production and inspection. Double-Gold strives to achieve precision in every detail, and our hardworking are just for offering the ideal products to our customers.



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NORMA Group Results Impacted by Covid-19

NORMA Group recorded an 8% decline in sales in the first quarter of 2020 to €253.6 million (Q1 2019: €275.6 million). Organic sales were down 8.9 %. Currency effects had a positive impact of 0.9% on Group sales.

Dr. Michael Schneider, CEO of NORMA Group, commented: “The uncertain situation of the global market due to the corona pandemic had a negative impact on our business in the first quarter of 2020. To protect our employees and in response to the significant drop in customer demand, we decided to temporarily shut down or interrupt production at several sites in mid-March. In the current situation, our focus is on maintaining our supply chains and securing our financial flexibility in order to be able to bridge temporary sales shortfalls. Thanks to our broad product portfolio and the global orientation of our business activities, however, we are confident that we can cushion the consequences of the corona pandemic as effectively as possible.”

NORMA Group sales in all three regions – EMEA, the Americas and Asia-Pacific – declined in the first quarter of 2020. The main reason for this was the weak automotive business, which deteriorated even further as a result of the restrictions imposed by the corona pandemic since March 2020. As a result, demand for joining technology in this sector fell sharply.

Separation of Arconic into Two Standalone Companies Complete

Arconic Inc has now been separated into two standalone companies - Howmet Aerospace Inc and Arconic Corporation. Howmet Aerospace, specialises in advanced engineered solutions and will start trading on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker "HWM." In 2019, the businesses comprising Howmet Aerospace generated more than US\$7 billion in revenue, up 5% from the prior year, with more than 70% of Howmet's revenue derived from the aerospace market.

The new company will be led by co-Chief Executive Officers John C. Plant, who will also serve as Executive Chairman of the Board, and Tolga Oal, who previously served as President of Arconic Engineered Structures.

Howmet has been a trusted brand for over 90 years and has the technological capabilities to support the innovation and growth of next generation aerospace programmes. Composed of engine products, fastening systems, engineered structures and forged wheels businesses, Howmet Aerospace is transforming the next phase of more fuel efficient, quieter aerospace engines and sustainable ground transportation. ■



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