# SAFETY ALERT

**Notification of Counterfeit C45N miniature circuit breakers.**

**Number: SA 01/08**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property Directorate Sponsor: Peter Meakin</th>
<th>Date of issue: 3 March 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Contact if different from ES&P Sponsor:

P Mursell, Defence Estates, Safety Systems Group,  
Kingston Rd, Sutton Coldfield, B75 7RL.  
Tel. 0121 311 2152  
Fax. 0121 311 3636  
E-Mail. Paul.mursell@de.mod.uk

Who Should Read this: CEstOs, Top Level Budget Holders, Project Sponsors, MOD Project Managers and others within the IPT (for both Prime, PFI/PPP and traditionally procured contracts), Defence Estates Advisors and Property Managers/Site Estate Representatives with responsibility for MOD projects and Property Management Works Services (including the legacy work of EWCS/WSMs) Coordinating Authorising Engineers, Authorising Engineers Electrical, Authorised Persons Electrical, purchasers and installers of final electrical distribution equipment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When it takes effect: Immediately</th>
<th>When it is due to expire: 03 March 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Document Aim: To notify all relevant parties of Counterfeit C45N miniature circuit breakers.
Product | Counterfeit C45N miniature circuit breakers
---|---
Manufacturer/Supplier | Unknown
Problem | Counterfeit product has no operating mechanism
Scope | All C45N MCB fitting the description in the manufactures warning notice.
Risk | Counterfeit product will not disconnect protected circuit in event of an overload or short circuit
Action | Notify all purchasers and installers of final electrical distribution equipment for use on MOD facilities of the risk.

1. Requirement:

1.1. **URGENT**: Addressees of this Safety Alert are to bring its contents to the attention of their Authorising Engineers (Electrical), (AE(E)), or equivalent, in order to make them aware of the notice issued by Schneider Electric.

1.2. AE(E)s are to ensure that action is taken to identify any counterfeit MCBs that have been used and that if any are held in stores they are not counterfeit.

1.3. Any counterfeit products identified are to be immediately reported to the MMO and the Authorising Engineer who is to ensure that an appropriate Operating Restrictions is applied.

1.4. AE(E)s are to ensure that a programme for the replacement of any counterfeit units found is developed and implemented at the earliest possible opportunity.

1.4.1. The earliest possible opportunity is to be established commensurate with operational requirements and the risk to personnel and property; the highest priority to be given to heavily used/urgent operational facilities - the lowest priority to unoccupied or rarely occupied or non essential facilities.

1.5. AE(E)s are to ensure that all parties involved in the procurement and installation of these units for use on MOD facilities are notified of the danger. Only appropriately rated electrical equipment from authorised or recognised suppliers should be purchased.

1.6. Finally, if records exist, AE(E)s are to notify suppliers of any counterfeit units found and copy this information to Schneider Electric.

2. Background:

2.1. The background to this problem is detailed the manufactures information notice attached to this Safety Alert at appendix A.
3. Further Information:

3.1. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONTENTS OF THIS ALERT WILL ENABLE COMPLIANCE WITH THE HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ETC ACT 1974 AND ITS SUBORDINATE REGULATIONS.

3.2. The appropriate MOD officer shall arrange for the RPC/ Maintenance Management Organisation (MMO) contractor to carry out all actions in accordance with this Alert.

3.3. Any work required as a result of this Alert must be carried out in accordance with JSP 375 Vol 3 – MOD’s Safety Rules & Procedures.

3.4. On MOD Establishments occupied by United States Visiting Forces (USVF) responsibility is jointly held by USVF and DE (USF). At base level this jointly managed organisation is to take appropriate action to implement the contents of this Alert. Where this Alert contains procedures which differ significantly from USVF practice DE (USF) code of practice will be issued.
Counterfeit and copy C45N miniature circuit breakers
Any company has a moral and legal obligation under the HSE and new Corporate Manslaughter and Homicide act (6th April 2008) to take all necessary steps to inform the industry when a potentially fake and dangerous product is brought to their attention. They must also take actions to track down the suppliers of these and the channel through which they are being supplied.

It has come to our notice that a very dangerous and fake copy of the C45N MCB has been found in another part of the European community. This copy has no internal workings, which would operate the device in the event of a fault occurring in the circuit that it is supposed to protect. This could have dire consequences for the user and lead to the suppliers and installer facing legal action.

Even though this device has been found in another country they may have found their way into the UK distribution market through non-approved channels and could already be installed. The fake device has similar markings to the C45N MCB, however we have not supplied this into the UK market since 1991 and any product like it, which is in the marketplace, is either a copy, counterfeit or worse still a complete fake.

What to look for:
Since the copy has very few internal components it is much lighter (a genuine product is between 103 and 110 grams) than the genuine MCB also the fake is made of plastic which is brittle and light cream in colour not light grey. A large Multi9 logo is at the top of the product.
There is large CE marking on the front face which the genuine product did not have since it was discontinued in the UK before CE marking was a requirement.

**What actions are we taking:**
We have informed the HSE who have circulated the information throughout the industry and we will be putting articles concerning copy and fake products in the trade press shortly.

**BEAMA** the industry trade association have also produced a leaflet highlighting counterfeit wiring accessories and circuit protection products in the industry, this will be available very shortly and will be publicised with Contractors, end users and Electrical Wholesalers.

For further information contact

Paul Canning Techno/Commercial Manager 01952 209027
paul.canning@gb.schneider-electric.com

Tom France Marketing Manger FLV products 01952 209179
tom.france@gb.schneider-electric.com