



ebmpapst

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Data centre managers must help shape future legislation, or stay a “soft target” for activists and law makers

UK data centre managers need to be aware of ongoing work to standardise their sector and get involved in the process, or risk being caught out by new laws and penalties.

This was the warning from data centre expert Mark Acton, critical product director at CBRE Norland Managed Services, while speaking to an audience of data centre managers, technicians and facilities managers last week.

Mr Acton was addressing delegates at a dedicated data centre seminar day hosted by leading fan manufacturer ebm-papst UK and held at the company's Chelmsford headquarters on August 7.

Explaining the lack of genuine clear international standards for data centres, Mr Acton said: “There are also lots of competing bodies trying to occupy the data centre space – but nobody really knows what we should be doing [in terms of standards] or which best practice group we should be following and whose colours we should be pinning to our masts.

“All of this gives environmental groups the opportunity to tell us what we should be doing - the adverse media attention is potentially very dangerous for the sector.”

He said data centres are increasingly becoming a “soft target” for environmental lobbyists and urged managers to be mindful of existing legislation that data centres could fall foul of, including being taxed for energy generation under the EU Emission Trading Scheme.

He also referenced the fact that since the 1st July, colocation data centres have become eligible for the Climate Change Agreement (CCA), this is a voluntary scheme which provides reduced carbon taxation by the UK Government in return for participants achieving energy efficiency targets.

Mr Acton was keen for managers to follow ISO's work to create new standards relevant to data centres, such as ISO 14040 on environmental management and ISO 50001 on energy management, which represent global standards for energy management.

He especially stressed the CENELEC - ISO/IEC International Electrotechnology Commission's new standard under development - EN50600 – which aims to be a true

international data-centre standard agreed by consensus and is being worked on by the British Standards Institute (BSI), as the UK representative body.

Urging facilities managers to feed into the BSI he said: “We can help design standards and legislation yet at the minute the industry is not really aware of how to become involved.”

He concluded: “There’s no doubt legislation will increase – we are a soft target with a high media profile – as data centres are consuming large amounts of energy and we don’t do anything that is tangibly useful (or certainly easily explained or defined) – we are going to get more legislation.

“But you need to be watching this space and getting involved with standards creation – by doing that you can all help shape your own future.”

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Media Enquiries

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About ebm-papst

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ebm-papst is represented in many industries, including ventilation, air-conditioning and refrigeration technology, household appliances, heating engineering, IT/telecommunications and industrial engineering.