



# Guidelines

## Pressure Systems

Guidelines for Users and Competent Persons on  
Postponement of Examinations

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## 1. Introduction

It is a requirement of the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations SI 2000 No 128 (PSSR) that examinations on parts of the pressure system have to be carried out within a period defined in a written scheme of examination (WSE). To comply with PSSR the pressure system must not continue in service beyond the due date indicated on the report of examination. There are occasions when it may not be possible for the User/Owner to make the pressure system available to the Competent Person to perform the examination. In these situations, Regulation 9(7) of PSSR allows for the postponement of the examination to a future date when the pressure system can be made available, as long as it is safe to do so.

## 2. Scope

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to Users/Owners and Competent Persons in agreeing postponements of examination under the PSSR. This methodology could be used, where appropriate, for postponements where non PSSR equipment requires an extension to the intended examination interval, for example an Atmospheric Storage Tank.

## 3. Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000

PSSR regulation 9(7) covers postponements of examination and guidance is given in ACOP Guide para 122 Suggested reporting requirements are provided in para 137 (m).

**Note 1:** The agreement to postpone the examination of a pressure system must be between the User/Owner and the Competent Person who issued the report of examination which specifies the due date. If the Competent Person has changed since the original examination then the Owner/User would need to refer the postponement to the Competent Person who carried out the examination.

**Note 2:** The regulations allow only one postponement for any one examination.

#### 4. Postponement Process

If the User/Owner decides that they will not be able to release a pressure system or part, e.g. a vessel, pipework or protective device, for examination by the required due date specified on the last report he will need to agree a postponement of the examination. However, if the due date of the examination has passed then a postponement will not be possible as the agreement to postpone needs to be notified in writing to the relevant enforcing authority before the due date of examination.

Once it is decided that a postponement is required then the User/Owner needs to collect the relevant information and present this to the competent person for review. Discussions with the Competent Person will be required to confirm that the item will not give rise to danger during the postponement period. Consideration of a postponement needs to be reasonably close in time to the original due date so that any further deterioration would be minimal but time allowed to make alternative arrangements where a postponement cannot be agreed. The outcome of the review will be one of the following:

- A. The postponement for the period requested is agreed. The Competent Person carries out an in-service examination to confirm that the item is still in good order and will not give rise to danger during the postponement period.
- B. The Competent Person declines to agree to a postponement, giving reasons why.
- C. The Competent Person requests further information from the User/Owner to justify the requested postponement.

Once an in-service examination of the item has been satisfactorily carried out then the Competent Person can issue a report of examination containing the relevant information to the User/Owner. Once agreement is reached the User/Owner should notify the postponement to the relevant enforcing authority, in writing, before the due date of examination.

**Note 1:** The postponement application, assessment, agreement and in-service examination should cover all of the pressure system identified in the report of examination e.g. information required for a steam boiler may include tests of safety valves and level controls, water treatment records and due dates for non-destructive testing.

**Note 2:** In certain circumstances an in-service examination of the equipment may not be possible, due to access, testing equipment or safety issues relating to the examination. In these cases it may be possible to issue an agreement to postpone provided an assessment of the history can demonstrate that the postponement will not give rise to danger.

**Note 3:** The period of postponement will be agreed between the User/Owner and Competent Person taking into account the plant history, previous inspection reports and any other relevant information. Postponements will in all cases be based on the continued safe operation of the plant and would normally be in the range of 10 to 25% of the specified inspection period based on engineering judgement.

For periods greater than 25% of the original examination period then a more detailed case/review may be needed to justify the extension to the operation of the equipment.

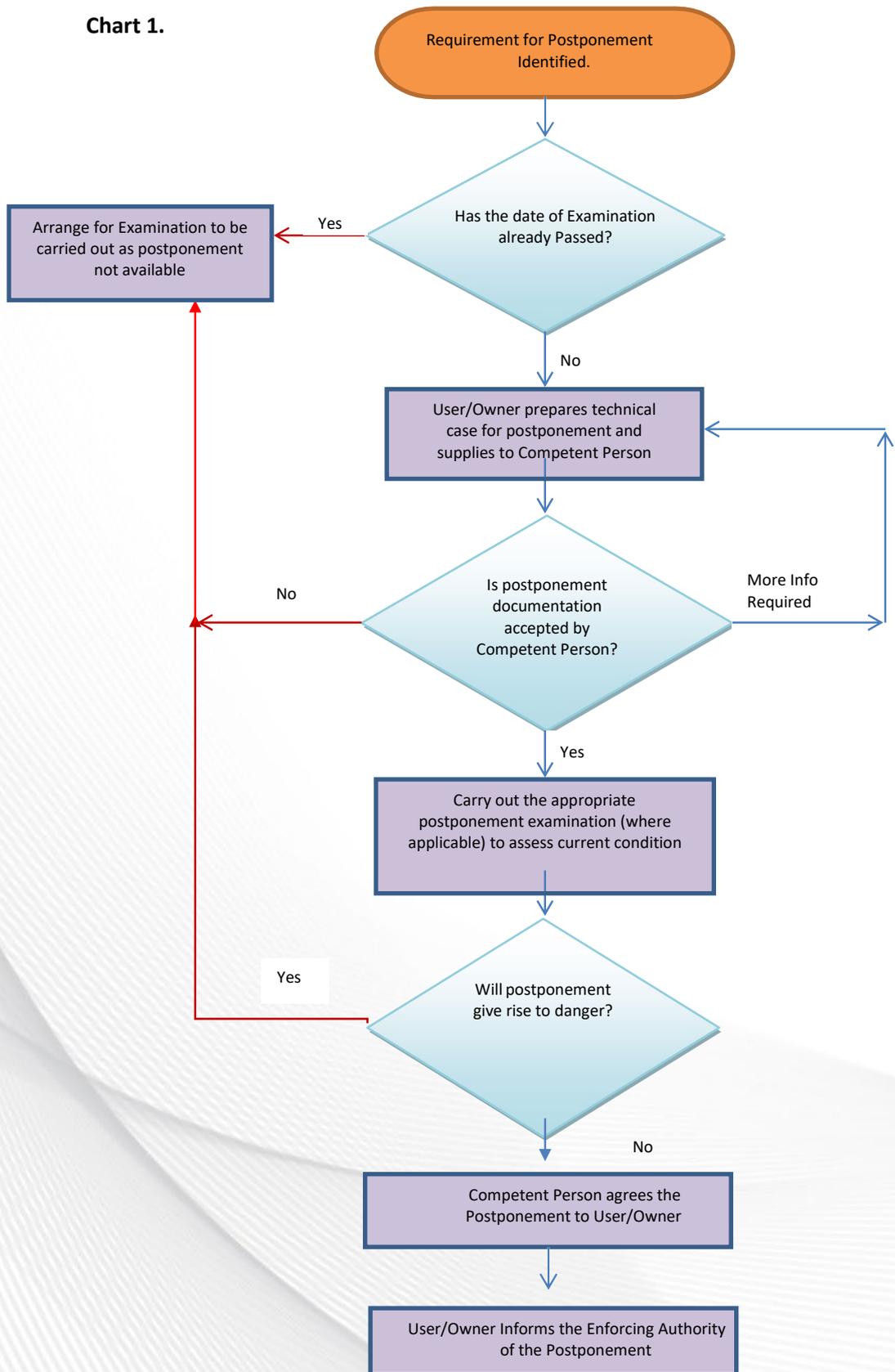
## **5. Reports of Postponement / Record Keeping**

Regulation 14 of PSSR requires the User/Owner to keep records of any agreement for postponement and a copy of the notification to the enforcing authority until a further examination is carried out. Once a postponement has been agreed by the Competent Person an examination report or a formal notification of this agreement should be sent to the User/Owner.

The following information should be reported and a record kept:

- A. Identification of the equipment, including WSE identification, and the name of the individual(s) within the User/Owner organisation agreeing to the postponement.
- B. Date that the examination is due and the new date by which the examination is to be completed.
- C. Authentication/signature of Competent Person agreeing to the Postponement.
- D. Date of Agreement.

Chart 1.



**Appendix 1 Information to be supplied.**

The following information may need to be provided to the Competent Person as part of the Postponement process:

- A. Identification of the pressure system or part where the examination is to be postponed.
- B. The date that the examination is required to be postponed to.
- C. The inspection/examination/maintenance history of the item, and any similar items that may be pertinent.
- D. Where practical, confirmation that the user considers the item safe for postponement.
- E. Confirmation that the item will continue to be maintained and operated correctly throughout the postponement period.
- F. Where appropriate, details of any specific ageing factors, such as fatigue, creep, active corrosion mechanisms etc, this may include the following:
  - 1. Known design life.
  - 2. Current design life usage
  - 3. Predicted design life usage in postponement period.