

## **MUTAmArq Essential Reading - Frequently Asked Questions**



### **What is MUTAmArq?**

MUTAmArq is an accreditation scheme for marquee hire companies which is endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive and run by MUTA. MUTA, formerly known as the Performance Textiles Association, is the trade association representing the marquee, tent and temporary structures industry as well as manufacturers and suppliers to the trade. Marquee hire companies admitted to the Association are accredited by MUTAmArq.

### **Why should I use marquee hire companies with MUTAmArq accreditation?**

Organisers must take safety issues into consideration when planning events or the consequences could be devastating. A marquee hire company with MUTAmArq accreditation subscribes to a Code of Practice which covers health and safety in terms of structural integrity, flame retardancy, public safety, and safety procedures for the erection and dismantling of structures, so event organisers can be confident that they are using a capable company working to professional standards.

An inquest held in May 2009 into the death of a marquee worker in Gloucestershire demonstrated the danger of venues and event organisers neglecting their duty of insisting on proof of competency and best practice. The company contracted to erect a marquee at Sudeley Castle was not MUTAmArq-accredited. If it had been, there would have been a skilled and competent foreman/supervisor with health and safety training on-site who would have recognised the danger.

### **How do companies earn the MUTAmArq accreditation?**

Only companies with at least two years experience in the sector, good supplier and commercial references, and which demonstrate compliance with the Code of Practice through an inspection are admitted into the Association.

Subscription fees, which go towards supporting the MUTAmArq inspectorate, start at £812 per year for the smallest companies. The application process, including a comprehensive health and safety inspection, normally takes six to eight weeks.

### **How does MUTA ensure companies comply with the requirements of the scheme?**

Once inspected and admitted to the Association, accredited companies remain subject to annual inspection to ensure compliance with the current Code of Practice. Each company furnishes MUTA with a list of its planned jobs and MUTA's inspectors use these lists as the basis for their programme of random inspections during the year.

### **What happens if a member fails to comply?**

MUTA takes very seriously reports of any of its members being in breach of the MUTAmArq Code of Practice. If in the course of a routine inspection a serious breach is found or a third party makes a complaint about a member's practices, the Association undertakes a full investigation of the member in question. If the Executive finds the member to be in breach of the code, then disciplinary action is taken, which may see the company expelled from the Association.

### **What other benefits do MUTA members receive?**

MUTA provides members with training support, advice on health and safety, news, supplier discounts, networking opportunities and a channel through which the industry can consult with the Health and Safety Executive, the Institute of Structural Engineers, BSI Group, the wider events industry and Government.

### **How can I be sure my contractor is MUTAmarq-certified?**

Ask to see a copy of their certificate and check for its validity and date. This gives you the reassurance that you are in safe hands. Before you choose a contractor, search the [www.muta.org.uk](http://www.muta.org.uk) membership database for registered members in your local area.

Look out for the MUTAmarq logo.

If in doubt, check that a company's accreditation is current with MUTA at <http://www.muta.org.uk/public/searchList.asp> or call us on 0207 618 9196.

### **What standards does the Code of Practice cover?**

MUTA has worked for many years with the Home Office, Institution of Structural Engineers, BSI Group and the HSE to develop the standards and guidance found in the Code of Practice.

Flame retardancy standards of tentage fabrics, inner linings and floor coverings are contained in the Home Office "Guide to Fire Precautions in places of Entertainment and Like Premises" (ISBN 0-11-340907-9) as amended by circular DCOL 14/1995 to Chief Fire Officers. See also British Standards BS 7837, BS 5438, and BS 7157.

Guidance on design and structural integrity is contained in "Temporary demountable structures – Guidance on design, procurement and use (Third Edition) (2007)" published by the Institution of Structural Engineers (Chapters 8.3 and 12 are of particular interest).

Guidance on health and safety practices is also contained in the HSE's "Guide to Health Safety and welfare at Pop Concerts and Other Similar Events" (ISBN 0-11-341072-7).

The current Code of Practice can be found here:

<http://www.muta.org.uk/public/downloads/mutamarg.pdf>