

**BRITISH STANDARD**

# **Materials used for the control of liquid spillages –**

## **Part 3: Colour coding of sorbent materials**

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## **Summary of pages**

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 4, an inside back cover and a back cover.

# Foreword

## **Publishing information**

This Part of BS 7959 was published by BSI and came into effect on 30 March 2007. It was prepared by Technical Committee CII/63, *Chemical spill control*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

## **Relationship with other publications**

BS 7959 is published in the following parts:

- *Part 1: Determination of sorbency;*
- *Part 2: Determination of water repellency or buoyancy for hydrophobic (oil sorbent) materials.*

## **Presentational conventions**

The provisions of this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its requirements are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “shall”.

*Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.*

Requirements in this standard are drafted in accordance with *The BSI guide to standardization – Section 2: Rules for the structure, drafting and presentation of British Standards*, subclause **11.3.1**, which states, “Requirements should be expressed using wording such as: ‘When tested as described in Annex A, the product shall ...’”. This means that only those products that are capable of passing the specified test will be deemed to conform to this standard.

## **Contractual and legal considerations**

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

**Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.**

# Introduction

The objective of this standard is to ensure as far as possible that maximum protection is given to personnel using sorbents, that the optimum choice of sorbent is made for protection of the environment and that correct disposal procedures are followed.

Sorbent materials are available with a wide variety of chemical compositions, ranging from natural fibres to mineral granules and man-made polymers. The chemical composition can influence certain key physical properties which determine how the sorbent behaves towards particular liquids. Of these properties those with the greatest importance are:

- **Oil selectivity**

The quantities and widespread applications of oils mean that the ability of sorbent materials to take up these liquids and reject water is important. Sorbents with this property are preferred for oils but do not work with aqueous solutions.

- **Resistance to aggressive liquids**

The sorbent material needs to resist the liquid with which it comes into contact. Any compromise of its physical properties would reduce its effectiveness as a sorbent and might cause handling problems and pose risks to personnel.

- **Chemical compatibility**

It is essential that the sorbent material and liquid do not react chemically to create additional hazards.

## 1 Scope

This part of BS 7959 specifies a system of colour coding for sorbent materials and their packaging which will assist users in identifying the correct material for use with a range of liquids.

- Type I: web type – sheet, pad or roll.
- Type II: loose material – discrete particles of variable size.
- Type III: filled products – socks, booms, pillows, cushions.
- Type IV: agglomerates – masses of strands for pick-up of viscous liquids.

*NOTE The colour coding alone is not intended to give a 100% reliable guide to the suitability of any sorbent material for use with a particular liquid. Users should in all cases consult with sorbent suppliers for full details of compatibility and with the Material Safety Data Sheet for the liquid. Where the sorbents and liquids are to be stored on a site the user should carry out a full site survey and risk analysis before selecting sorbent materials. In particular combustible sorbents should not be used with oxidising liquids because of the risk of dangerous reaction on immediate or prolonged contact.*

## 2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this part of BS 7959, the following terms and definitions apply.

### 2.1 oil selective sorbent

sorbent recommended by manufacturers or suppliers for use with oils, hydrocarbons and liquids which do not mix with water and which will not pick up water or aqueous solutions

### 2.2 maintenance sorbent

sorbent recommended by manufacturers or suppliers for use with most liquids which do not degrade the sorbent but which is not resistant to degradation by aggressive liquids

### 2.3 chemical sorbent

sorbent recommended by manufacturers or suppliers for use with most liquids including aggressive liquids

## 3 Colour coding

### 3.1 Colours

The following colours shall be used for the three categories of sorbent.

- Oil selective: white or blue.
- Maintenance: grey.
- Chemical: yellow.

### 3.2 Material

#### 3.2.1 Types I and III

Materials of types I and III shall be self-coloured in accordance with **3.1** over a minimum of 90% of the surface area.

#### 3.2.2 Types II and IV

Where practical, materials of types II and IV shall be self-coloured in accordance with **3.1**. Where not practical, packaging shall clearly indicate the colour in accordance with **3.1**.

### 3.3 Packaging

*NOTE All primary packaging, including spill kits, is included.*

#### 3.3.1 Size

The packaging marking shall incorporate a panel coloured in accordance with **3.1** of minimum area 10 000 mm<sup>2</sup>. This panel may be of any shape but must be of size sufficient to incorporate the required wording at the size stated in **3.3.2**.

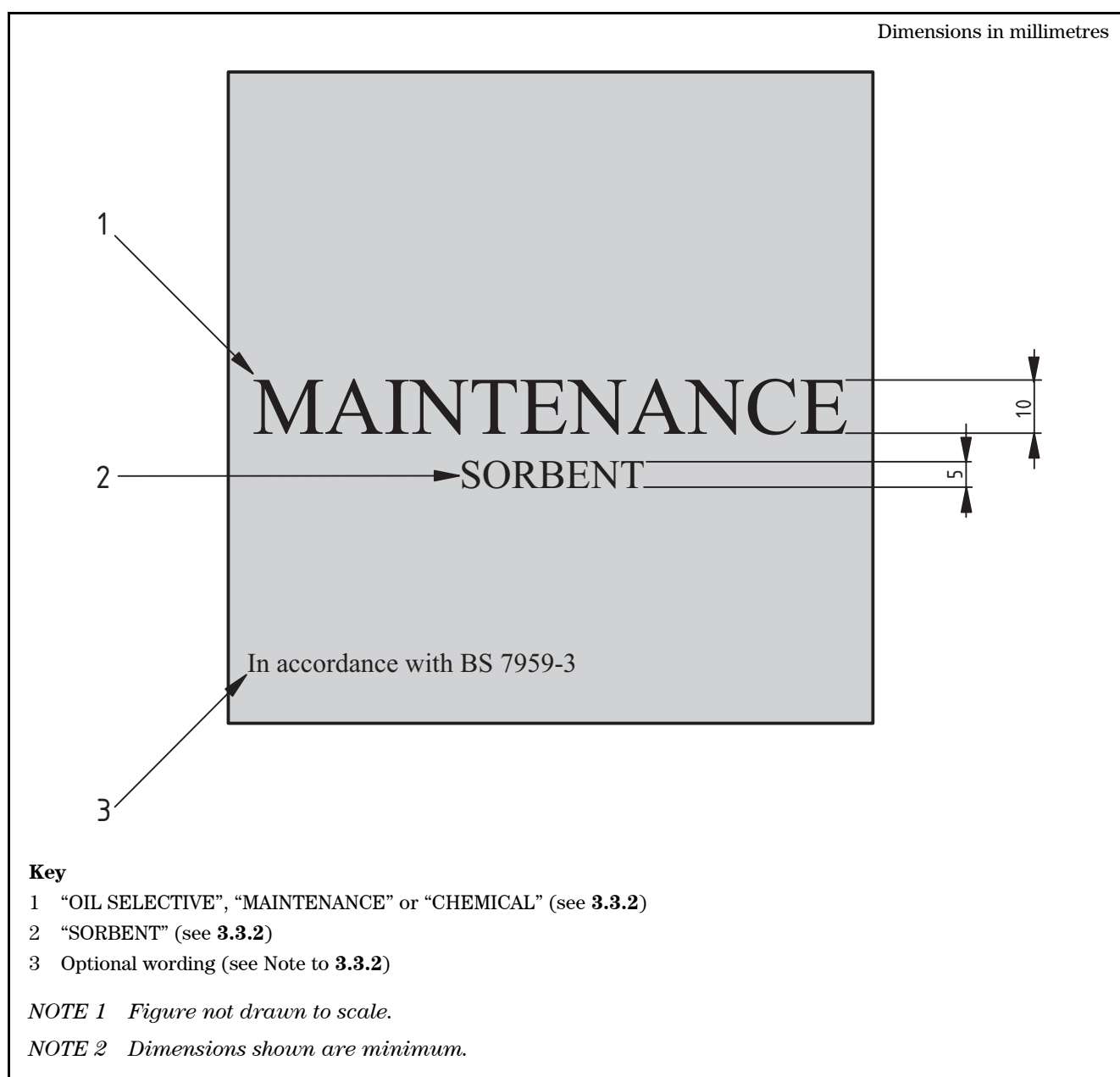
### 3.3.2 Wording

The panel (see 3.3.1) shall be marked “OIL SELECTIVE”, “MAINTENANCE” or “CHEMICAL” as appropriate so as to be clearly legible and with a minimum character height of 10 mm. The panel shall also include the word “SORBENT” with a minimum character height of 5 mm.

The wording shall be in a contrasting colour not listed for a different category of sorbent in 3.1.

*NOTE* The panel may also include the wording “In accordance with BS 7959-3:2006” in smaller lettering.

Figure 1 Example of packaging marking for maintenance sorbents



# Bibliography

## Standards publications

For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

BS 7959-1, *Materials used for the control of liquid spillages – Part 1: Determination of sorbency*

BS 7959-2, *Materials used for the control of liquid spillages – Part 2: Determination of water repellency or buoyancy for hydrophobic (oil sorbent) materials*

## Other publications

[1] GREAT BRITAIN. Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations 2002. London: The Stationery Office [Statutory Instrument 2002 No. 1689].





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