

Guidelines For The Purchase Of Beer Kegs/Casks Both New & Secondhand



- **Ensure the seller has title to the containers** – written confirmation that the containers are available for sale is recommended; ask for copies of original invoices to ensure the containers were not originally purchased by a finance company. Make enquiries if the containers have been part of a refinancing arrangement post purchase.
- **Is the container from a recognised manufacturer?** If not, may need to make more checks regarding quality of base materials.
- **Carefully check the general condition of the containers**, looking for:
 - Dents to the body of sufficient size/number that may make the container hold less than specified;
 - Damage to chimbs which may effect stacking or racking
 - Evidence of previous weld repairs/plating made to the body of the container that my damage/discolour the inside of the container.
 - Evidence of leaking, either from pin holes or around openings which may suggest misuse or damage.
- **Check that the size/volume of the container is what is required**
- **It is to the advantage of the new owner to have the Casks or Kegs purchased re-branded in the new Brewer's name and colours at the earliest opportunity.** This should be completed before containers allowed into use to avoid identification issues later. Please refer to the BBPA/SIBA Master Container Database (www.beerandpub.com/cask) to ensure the registration of an appropriate and eligible colour banding scheme.
- Check License details – just in case they are to be used abroad?
- Container Serial numbers to be identified and listed as part of sale.
- Rolling ring – profile of the rolling ring is critical when addressing hygiene issues relating to keg washing.
- Drawings to be given to buyer where available.

Casks:

Check:

- Keystone housing – UK No.2 & lack of damage (aluminium especially), is keystone deflected in anyway so dispense becomes an issue.
- Shive bush size – compatibility with existing fleet
- Shive bush – lack of damage (aluminium especially)

Aluminium Casks

- The sale / purchase of second hand aluminium casks is not recommended. Condition of epoxy lining - can be affected by external damage, attempted repairs, general age, poor cleaning, contamination.

- If “de-wooding” shives/keystones, do not use a metal spike. This etches and cuts into the cask lining, exposing the aluminium surface, which, in turn, causes aluminium pickup into the beer

Plastic Casks

- Cracks, splits, seam integrity, any attempt at repair
- Damage to shive bush and keystone housing (including shape and consistency of openings)
- Contamination of the inside through use of products other than beer

Kegs

Check:

- **Spear type & neck size** – compatibility with existing fleet either 63, 70 or 75mm & safety type.
- **Gas space in keg at full** – gas space at full must be a maximum of 10mm height.
- **Overall dimensions** - will they fit with any existing population for stacking and handling, if contract filling - will they fill.
- The sale/purchase of aluminium kegs is not recommended. If purchased, check condition of epoxy lining

Downtubes/Spears:

Be aware of the many different designs of downtubes/spears available and accompanying safety hazards:

- **Are the spears the right configuration to match what the customer already has** (the various types are - Round top/A type – Trilobe/G type - Well – UEC/S type or UEC)?
- **Are the spears fitted with a safety device?** If not, can either a retro safety device be fitted or will a new spear need to be purchased (it is suggested that a random 10 spears/downtubes be removed and checked for this feature)?
- **Are the rubber seals in good condition** (it is suggested that a random 10 kegs be checked)? This can be done by gassing up the kegs, then put some water over the rubber seals and then look for leaks.
- Physical Specifications: the following should be addressed:
 - Filling Flow Rate
 - Compatibility with keg filling line
 - Residual liquid at empty
 - Compatibility with connector
 - Removal torque
 - Safety pressure
- **Manufacturer details?**

Disposal of Containers:

If you are looking to dispose of containers, please ensure you refer to the **BBPA Technical Circular 423**, available on BBPA and SIBA websites.

www.beerandpub.com

www.siba.co.uk

This information is provided courtesy of BFBi Keg & Cask Committee, representing the large pack container value chain supplying the brewing and beverage industry. It is intended as guidance for purchasers of casks and kegs. This is not a legal document, nor should the advice given be deemed to be mandatory.