NFPA 79-2007
Electrical Standard for Industrial Machinery
TIA Log No.: 989
Reference: 9.2.7.3
Comment Closing Date: June 18, 2010
Submitter: Tom Elswick, Siemens Industry, Inc.

1. Revise text to read as follows:

9.2.7.3 Stop Function.
9.2.7.3.1 Operator control stations shall include a separate and clearly identifiable means to initiate the stop function of the machine or of all the motions that causes a hazardous condition. The actuating means to initiate this stop function shall not be marked or labeled as an emergency stop device, even though the stop function initiated on the machine results in an emergency stop function meet the requirements of 9.2.2, 9.2.5.3, 9.2.5.4, 9.2.7.4 and 10.7.3.

Submitter’s Substantiation: Siemens currently offers our Mobile Panel 277F IWLAN product in other parts of the world, but has not released the product for sale in the United States due to the existing wording of NFPA 79, clause 9.2.7.3. Other than that clause, the product fully meets the rest of the NFPA 79 requirements and guidelines. We believe the current wording of the clause unnecessarily restricts the functions allowed on Cableless Control stations, and as such, places our product in direct conflict with the restrictions, with the specific issue being that our wireless device includes a safety function labeled as an “Emergency Stop” function. Please consider our suggested wording modification as listed in light of the current safety certified state of the art for programmable safety devices, both wired and wireless safety bus technology, and the potential machine applications that these types of products can safely address.
Note: Supporting material is available for review at NFPA Headquarters.

Technical Nature: Control systems incorporating software and firmware based controllers performing safety-related functions have been allowed by NFPA 79 since the 2002 updated publication. Likewise, safety certified bus technology (including wireless) is also broadly in use throughout industry. These technologies for safety-related functions are now available in cableless operator panels which no longer need the restrictions as currently stated for an emergency stop function. Proper application requirements are already provided in the referenced clause additions.

Emergency Nature: By modifying clause 9.2.7.3.1 as shown above, industry will not be restricted from applying cableless operator panels currently available or use and that are certified and listed for safety applications and in compliance with NFPA 79, 2007 and other critical domestic and international safety standards.

Anyone may submit a comment by the closing date indicated above. To submit a comment (on company letterhead), please identify the number of the TIA and forward to the Secretary, Standards Council, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy MA 02169-7471.