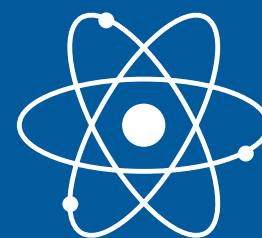


ELECTRON

EMPOWERING TODAY'S ELECTRICAL WORKERS



ISSUE NO 15

JULY 2004



John Sickels
Registrar

On 30 June 2004 the State Services Minister Trevor Mallard and Acting Housing Minister Rick Barker announced several changes to government agencies aimed at improving and streamlining building and housing services for the public.

One of the changes is that the Electrical Workers Licensing Group will move from the Ministry of Economic Development to an expanded Ministry of Housing.

The expanded Ministry of Housing will be renamed the Department of Building and Housing to reflect the changes in its work.

It is anticipated that the Electrical Workers Licensing Group will move to the new Department during February 2006.

The Ministers full press statement is included in this issue of ELECTRON.

As indicated in issue 13 of ELECTRON the Board wishes to use the results of complaint hearings as an educational tool for the industry. This issue of ELECTRON contains greater detail on complaint results.

I am pleased to announce that agreement has been reached with Standards New Zealand for the Board to print and distribute copies of the newly issued testing Standard – AS/NZS 3760:2003 (In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment).

The Board has a strategic initiative to make all information relevant to the electrical/electronic industry available to those registered electrical workers who uplift practising licences.

In the past the copies of AS/NZS 3000, a CD containing nine companion standards, codes of practice and a regulation compilation have been provided to practising licence holders. In line with the Boards strategic initiative all persons who held a practising licence at 30 June 2004 and all industry training organisation trainees will be sent a copy of the new Standard.

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Practising Licence Renewals

As at 26 July 2004 there were 15,728 practising licence renewals processed for the 2004/2005 practising licence year. The result means that there has been a 75% completion of the Boards annual target figure since the practising licence renewal packs were distributed in May 2004.

Of the 15,728 practising licence renewals 4,577 were done on line.

The following table shows the comparison of on line practising licence applications since the inception of the on line licensing facility.

Practising licence year	On line applications
2001/2002	3
2002/2003	2,089
2003/2004	3,683
2004/2005 (as at 26 July 2004)	4,577

The Board would like to acknowledge the manner in which the industry has promptly responded to the practising licence renewal exercise and in particular for the uptake of the on line facility.

Certificates of Compliance

As at 30 June 2004 Certificate of Compliance sales for the year were recorded at 187,359. Preliminary figures show that this is an increase of 20,941 certificates sold over last year.

Again the Board would like to acknowledge the efforts of a considerable number of people in the industry who ensure certification is provided to the public.

Electrical Safety Certificates

A total of 216,950 Electrical Safety Certificates have been distributed during the year to practising licence holders who wish to use the voluntary certification system offered by the certificates.

Board Examinations

In October 2003 the Board requested proposals for the effective and efficient conducting of examination services.

The Board subsequently received a number of proposals and after full consideration of the propositions, the Board has made a

decision to retain the administration of its examinations under the Electrical Workers Licensing Group.

The Board will continue to offer examinations from time to time as advised in information circulars to training providers and in ELECTRON.

Training Provider Visits

The Board has recently commenced EWLG staff visits to Training Providers and feedback has indicated that this is a very worthwhile exercise.

Employer Licence Audits

During June the Electrical Workers Licensing Group conducted audits of ten Employer Licence holders and the results of those audits are now being collated. Further audits will be carried out during August 2004.

Managing South Island Supply

This article has been reproduced with the permission of Transpower New Zealand Limited, Wellington as the subject is considered to be of interest and importance to many in the electrical and electronic industry.

Every effort continues to be made to avoid the possibility of short-term power outages in the upper South Island this winter.

Transpower has been working with the electricity industry since mid April to address short-term security of supply issues in the upper South Island. This has included providing real time demand and capacity information to help distributors and others co-ordinate the management of demand at peak times.

Parts of the upper South Island are experiencing strong growth in demand for electricity. Last summer Transpower installed new sub-station equipment in Christchurch with capacitors that enable the amount of electricity transported into the upper South Island to be increased by around 4% compared to last year.

Transpower has been working with the Electricity Commission, lines companies, high load customers and others to put together additional measures to maintain system security.

The result is a range of measures that can be put in place during times of peak load, typically between 17-00 and 19-30 on weekdays :

- Full ripple control of water heating by lines companies

- Additional use of customer owned generation
- Assisting with additional standby diesel generation
- Maximising output at existing generators
- Switching part of Timaru to service from other transmission lines so that it does not add to the upper South Island load
- Adding capacitors to one local network
- Arrangements with some high load customers to reduce demand if necessary

As well, "intertrip" devices have been added to Transpowers network, which allow lines to carry more power, with the ability to respond if voltage stability becomes an issue so that overall system security is maintained.

The intertrips have increased the load limit for the upper South Island (the area north of Timaru) to 1055 MW. At the time of publication the highest demand recorded so far this winter has been 971 MW on Friday 23rd July.

New Regulations for Trees and Power Lines

New regulations were introduced by the Government late last year governing the trimming of trees near power lines.

The regulations are designed to promote safety and help maintain power supplies.

The regulations define separation distances between trees and power lines and specify who is responsible for ensuring the clearances are maintained.

A detailed summary of the regulations is available on the Ministry of Economic Development website at www.med.govt.nz

Results of Complaints

Since issue 13 of ELECTRON Complaints Assessment Committees have considered twelve complaints, which had been laid against eight electricians, two electrical inspectors and two line mechanics.

The Committees are referring four of the twelve complaints to the Board for disciplinary hearings.

One complaint is currently adjourned and the Committees have dismissed the other seven complaints.

Results of Disciplinary Hearings

Lindsay Forde Torrie (E 13599)

A complaint was lodged against Mr Lindsay Forde Torrie an electrician from Auckland by a Government Department.

It was alleged that Mr Torrie:

- carried out unsatisfactory prescribed electrical work,
- failed to have work he carried out on a switchboard inspected,
- failed to issue a certificate of compliance,
- was not the holder of a current practising licence while carrying out prescribed electrical work for reward.

The Board considered the complaint and found Mr Torrie guilty of disciplinary offences in that he:

- contravened section 95 of the Electricity Act 1992 by not holding a current practising licence when he carried out prescribed electrical work for reward, and
- contravened regulations 39, 41, 69, 70, 86, and 87 of the Electricity Regulations 1997 in that he failed to certify his work, failed to have his work inspected, caused a serious fire hazard through using improper fittings, transposed earth and neutral conductors, failed to install an earth/neutral link and left loose connections.

Mr Torrie's electrician registration was suspended until he passes stages 1, 2 & 3 of the electrician level practical assessment and he was fined \$1,250. Mr Torrie was also ordered to pay costs of \$750.

Electrician

As a result of an electrical worker being depicted in a television programme failing to supervise a trainee, a complaint was lodged against an electrician from Palmerston North by a Government Department.

The Board considered the complaint and the electrician demonstrated to the Board that the supervision requirements of section 2 of the Electricity Act 1992 had been satisfied as were the requirements of the Boards supervision guidelines.

The Board ordered that no further action be taken against the electrician in relation to the complaint.

The Board did not direct the electricians name be published.

Chris Neil Hansen (E 7780)

A homeowner complained that Chris Neil Hansen, an electrician from Auckland had left live wires hanging out of walls and had caused another electrician to receive an electric shock. It was also alleged that Mr Hansen's supervision of his apprentice was not adequate.

The Board considered the complaint and found Mr Hansen guilty of disciplinary offences in that he:

- contravened section 2(1) of the Electricity Act 1992 in that he did not provide supervision to a trainee to a level that satisfied the requirements of the section, and
- contravened section 95 of the Electricity Act 1992 by not holding a current practising licence when he carried out prescribed electrical work for reward, and
- contravened regulation 37 in that he furnished a false certificate of compliance.

Mr Hansen was fined \$750 for failing to have a current practising licence and \$250 for furnishing a false certificate of compliance. Mr Hansen was censured for failing to supervise a trainee adequately and ordered to pay costs of \$1000.

Electrician

An electrician from Auckland lodged a complaint about unsatisfactory work carried out by an electrical contracting company from Auckland.

Following an investigation the electrician who carried out the work in question was identified and the matter was referred to the Board.

The Board considered the complaint and found the electrician guilty of a disciplinary offence in that the electrician contravened section 95 of the Electricity Act 1992 by not holding a current practising licence when he carried out prescribed electrical work for reward.

The electrician was fined \$1,000 and ordered to pay costs of \$750.

The Board did not direct the electrician's name be published.

Electrician

A complaint was lodged against an electrician from Tauranga by a consultant who was concerned that the electrician had carried out unsatisfactory work in school dental clinics.

The Board considered the complaint and found the electrician guilty of disciplinary offences in that the electrician contravened

regulations 87 and 90 of the Electricity Regulations 1997 in that one installation was not constructed in a manner which took into account the dangers it created and did not offer protection from ingress of moisture which could result in a hazard.

The Board censured the electrician and ordered the electrician to pay costs of \$500.

The Board did not direct the electrician's name be published.

Dennis Bruce Allen (EST 594)

A complaint was received from homeowners in Taupo who were concerned that Mr Dennis Bruce Allen, an electrical service technician from Taupo, had led them to believe he was an electrician and that he had carried out the work of an electrician. The homeowners were also concerned that Mr Allen's electrical work was unsatisfactory.

The Board considered the complaint and found Mr Allen guilty of disciplinary offences in that he:

- contravened section 95 of the Electricity Act 1992 by not holding a current practising licence when he carried out prescribed electrical work for reward, and
- contravened regulations 18, 69, 70, 71, 76, 87 and 88 of the Electricity Regulations 1997 in that he worked outside the limits of his electrical service technician registration, created a serious fire hazard, left loose conductor connections, failed to identify conductors, installed cables that were not rated for the steady current likely to be carried, failed to provide mechanical protection to cables and did not comply with voltage drop requirements.

Please note that the regulations referred to in this case are those that were in use prior to the amendments which came into force in January 2003.

Mr Allen advised the Board that he would not be engaging in prescribed electrical work in the future.

The Board fined Mr Allen \$1,000 for working without a practising licence, \$750 for working outside the limits of his electrical service technicians registration, and \$750 for carrying out defective work.

Mr Allen was also ordered to pay costs of \$1,250.

TECHNICAL AND GENERAL QUESTION CORNER

Q: Who do I contact when I encounter bad workmanship, bad electrical installations, fittings or electrical appliances?

A: Electrical accidents resulting in serious injury or death or any fire that is electrically initiated rendering the place unusable are to be reported to the Secretary immediately (Electricity Act 1992: section 16). There is a free phone number available for this purpose: 0800 10 44 77 or fax 04 460 1365

Any registered person carrying out or inspecting prescribed electrical work who finds work that is immediately hazardous to life or limb must report it to the Secretary (regulation 50 of the Electricity Regulations 1997).

This can be done by telephoning 800 10 44 77, 0800 66 1000 or free fax 0508723336.

Work that is not immediately hazardous to life or limb is the responsibility of the person who has control of the work (regulations 69 and 94 of the Electricity Regulation 1997).

The person having control of those works, electrical installations, appliances or associated electrical equipment must take all practical steps to minimise the risk. There is no statutory requirement to notify the Secretary of work that is not immediately hazardous.

However, if you wish to complain about the person who carried out the work then you need to contact the Electrical Workers Licensing Group on 0800 66 1000.

If the person who carried out the work is registered then you are entitled to lodge a written complaint

with the Registrar (section 119 of the Electricity Act 1992). This will initiate a Complaints Assessment Committee, which may lead to a complaint hearing.

If the person who carried out the work is not registered then an investigation may be carried out which could result in a prosecution.

Instead of prosecution, compliance by way of registration/licensing is also considered a positive outcome.

Q: Which regulations are the current Electricity Regulations?

A: The current Electricity Regulations are the Electricity Regulations 1997 as amended by:

- The Electricity Amendment Regulations 1999 which came into force on 18 November 1999; and
- The Electricity Amendment Regulations 2002 part of which came into force on 1 January 2003 and part on 1 April 2003; and
- The Electricity Amendment Regulations 2003 which came into force on 8 January 2004.

The Electricity Regulations Compilation 2003 was issued by the Board to provide one document for easier reference.

The Board intends to update the compilation in the future.

You can always find the current Electricity Act and Electricity Regulations (incorporating all changes) on the internet at <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/>

New Department of Building and Housing

On 30 June 2004 the State Services Minister Trevor Mallard and Acting Housing Minister Rick Barker announced several changes to government agencies aimed at improving and streamlining building and housing services for the public.

The Ministry of Housing will be expanded through the transfer of relevant functions from the Ministry of Economic Development, Department of Internal Affairs, and Ministry of Social Development.

The expanded Ministry of Housing will be a one-stop shop, renamed the Department of Building and Housing.

"Our government is committed to strengthening the public service so it better serves New Zealanders. Our decisions from the housing sector review will see a 'one-stop-shop' for regulatory issues and standards affecting building and housing, and for dispute resolutions," Trevor Mallard said.

"It will provide a much more integrated approach to policy development and advice to government, and to compliance and enforcement."

Rick Barker said a recent review of agencies with housing and building-related responsibilities had found building and housing regulatory and dispute resolution functions were spread across too many departments.

"Consequently resources are spread too thinly, it is difficult to develop 'critical mass' for policy advice, and policy and operations are too distant from one another," Rick Barker said.

"The improvements will be of real benefit to the housing and building industries also, as we bring together people who are already working on similar issues but in different departments."

The reconfigured department will:

- carry out the present work of the Ministry of Housing;
- manage the administration of the Weathertight Homes Resolution Services Act 2002;
- be responsible for administration of the new Building Act (including absorbing the functions and employees of the Building Industry Authority) and the occupational licensing regulation associated with the building and housing sector;
- administer the Retirement Villages legislation currently administered by the Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Economic Development;
- perform a range of other duties including regulation of housing standards, administration of the legislation around the fencing of swimming pools (currently with the Department of Internal Affairs), and Electrical Workers Licensing; and
- provide policy advice to Government in relation to the dispute resolution and regulatory responsibilities.

The new department is expected to be in place by November 2004, with the transfer of functions to be carefully phased in over the next couple of years.

"In particular, users of the Weathertight Homes Resolution Service should be assured that the service will be transferred intact to the re-configured department, and will continue to operate as a dedicated service," Rick Barker said.

The department will work closely with Housing New Zealand Corporation, which will retain its current responsibilities including leadership of the development and implementation of the New Zealand Housing Strategy.

Practising Licence Refresher Course

In September 2003 the Board released a discussion document on the minimum requirements for electrical worker practising licence refresher courses.

In excess of three hundred submissions were received on the document and a summary of submissions was tabled at the February 2004 Board meeting. Following consideration of the submissions the Board referred the draft minimum requirements to the Registrar for further research and consultation.

A discussion paper has been developed after consideration of the views of the commentators to the document and the concerns of the Board, which were listed in the document.

The discussion paper sets out the policy for practising licence refresher courses and while course content is addressed from a subject matter perspective, the degree to which the subject matter is tutored is not covered.

A copy of the discussion paper accompanies this issue of ELECTRON.

If you would like to comment on this paper please address your correspondence to me at P O Box 10156, Wellington or email to john.sickels@med.govt.nz by 20 September 2004


John Sickels
Registrar



Correction

7 July 2004 – We inadvertently included some incorrect information in the last wavelength edition in “Seeing Rainbows on Channel One? Better Check Your Cordless Phone!” Unfortunately the last two paragraphs of the article were entirely incorrect – in fact, cordless telephones purchased in Australia are frequently not acceptable for use in New Zealand.

If you have a cordless phone, check to ensure that it meets the Radiocommunications Regulations (General User Radio Licence for Cordless Telephones) Notice 2003 or the Radiocommunications Regulations (General User Radio Licence for Short Range Devices) Notice 2003. This information can be viewed online at www.med.govt.nz/rsm/licensing/gurls/gurl-ct.pdf

If you purchased your cordless phone in New Zealand, simply check that the base station or the handset carries a label showing a New Zealand Supplier Code Number which is a number prefixed by a Z (e.g. Z999). Also check that the base station and the charging transformer bears the C-Tick symbol  (the electromagnetic compatibility compliance mark used in New Zealand and Australia).

These checks will indicate if your cordless phone is designed to operate properly in New Zealand without causing interference.

Radio Spectrum Management apologises for any confusion.