



Electrical Workers Registration Board

SAFETY | COMPETENCY | COMPLIANCE

Supervision of persons who are not Limited Certificate Holders

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy provides guidance to persons being Supervised, Supervisors and the employers of persons being Supervised to carry out prescribed electrical work under section 76 of the *Electricity Act 1992* (the Act).

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Extracts from the Act and the Electricity (Safety) Regulations 2010 (ESR 2010) are italicised.
- 2.2 Section 74 of the Act restricts who can carry out prescribed electrical work (as defined by the Act) to those persons who are registered and hold a current licence or who are operating under an Employer Licence.
- 2.3 Section 76 of the Act provides for a general exemption for prescribed electrical work carried out under Supervision. The section states:

76 Exemption for work done under supervision

A person (the supervised person) may do any prescribed electrical work, or assist in doing any prescribed electrical work, if—

- (a) that work is within the limits prescribed in regulations made for the purposes of this section; and*
- (b) the work done by the supervised person is carried out under the supervision of a registered person who holds a current practising licence issued under this Act that authorises the person to supervise electrical work; and*
- (c) except as provided in any regulations, while that work is being carried out by the supervised person, no part of the work is connected to a power supply; and*
- (d) the work is—*
 - (i) tested and certified in accordance with regulations; and*
 - (ii) connected to a power supply by a registered person who holds a current practising licence issued under this Act that authorises the person to supervise electrical work.*

- 2.4 The restrictions imposed on who can carry out prescribed electrical work are to ensure electrical work is carried out competently and in accordance with all statutory requirements to protect the safety of the public and property.
- 2.5 The general exemption under section 76 recognises that persons may assist with prescribed electrical work within certain limits provided they are Supervised. This is to ensure that the work meets all safety, competency and compliance requirements.
- 2.6 A Supervisor (the Supervisor) is a person who holds a current practising licence and registration in the class of registration for the prescribed electrical work they are Supervising. It is the Supervisor who is ultimately responsible and liable for the work of the person being Supervised.
- 2.7 This policy also applies to licensed persons working outside of their class of registration. For example, an Electrical Service Technician carrying out prescribed electrical work that an Electrician is authorised to carry out, under the Supervision of an authorised person with a current practicing licence.
- 2.8 This policy does not apply to:
- a) any exemptions granted by the Electrical Workers Registration Board (the Board) under section 75 of the Act (exempt person or class of persons);
 - b) prescribed electrical work carried out under section 77 of the Act (exemption for Trainees who hold a Limited Certificate, which is covered in Board Policy B-PO-05 – Supervision of Trainees Holding a Limited Certificate);
 - c) prescribed electrical work carried out under section 79 of the Act (exemption for domestic electrical wiring work); or
 - d) prescribed electrical work carried out under section 80 of the Act (exemption for maintenance of domestic appliances).
- 2.9 Supervisors and those working under Supervision need to ensure that they comply with their duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.
- 2.10 Supervisors are encouraged to read the Supervision Companion Guide developed by the Board to help Supervisors understand the Supervision role and responsibilities.
- 2.11 A person who holds a provisional licence can carry out prescribed electrical work without Supervision but cannot be a Supervisor.

3. Definition of Supervision

- 3.1 Supervision is defined by section 2 of the Act as, and the for the purposes of this policy Supervision is:

supervision, in relation to any work, means that the work is undertaken under such control and direction of a person authorised under this Act to do the work [or, in the case of section 76, a person authorised to supervise work under that section] as is sufficient to ensure—

- (a) that the work is performed competently; and*
- (b) that while the work is being undertaken, appropriate safety measures are adopted; and*
- (c) that the completed work complies with the requirements of any regulations made under section 169 of this Act.*

- 3.2 For the purposes of this policy, Supervision includes Supervise and Supervised.

4. Limits of Prescribed Electrical Work Under Supervision

- 4.1 The limits of the prescribed electrical work that a person under Supervision may do are set out in Regulation 92 of the ESR 2010, which provides:

92 Limits of work that supervised persons may do

- (1) *For the purposes of section 76(a) of the Act, the prescribed electrical work that a person who is under supervision may do, or assist in doing, is any work that is within the scope of work that the person's supervisor is authorised to do, except that a person under supervision may not—*
- (a) *connect or disconnect a supply of electricity to works or an installation or appliance; or*
 - (b) *do any certification or inspection of works, installations, fittings, or appliances.*
- (2) *Despite section 76(c) of the Act, a supervised person may test works, installations, fittings, or appliances that are connected to a power supply provided there is no direct access to live parts at a voltage above extra-low voltage.*

- 4.2 A person working under Supervision in accordance with this policy cannot work on live installations and cannot connect or disconnect works or an installation or appliance to a power supply.

5. What Work Must be Supervised

- 5.1 All prescribed electrical work completed by a person under Supervision must be Supervised by a Supervisor in accordance with the Act and the ESR 2010.

6. What Can a Supervisor Supervise

- 6.1 A Supervisor can only Supervise work which the Supervisor is authorised to carry out.
- 6.2 It is the Supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the Supervision they provide meets the requirements of the Act and the ESR 2010. Each situation must be assessed to determine the level and extent of Supervision required.
- 6.3 Work done under the section 76 exemption must not include the Supervision of the connection or disconnection of a supply of electricity to works or an installation or appliance or any certification or inspection of works, installations, fittings, or appliances. However, a person being Supervised may test works, installations, fittings, or appliances that are connected to a power supply provided there is no direct access to live parts at a voltage above extra-low voltage.

7. How Many People Can Be Supervised

- 7.1 The number of people a Supervisor can Supervise at any one time is determined by the registration class and the practising licence they hold.
- 7.2 A supervisor issued a practising licence under the Electricity (Prescribed Classes of Registration for Electrical Workers) Notice 2025, that is not an Electrical Inspector, must hold an endorsed supervision registration class to supervise more than two persons to carry out prescribed electrical work at any one time. An Electrical Inspector may Supervise any number of people.
- 7.3 The limit on the number of people that may be Supervised at one time to carry out prescribed electrical work includes persons Supervised under section 76 of the Act and Trainees holding a Limited Certificate.

8. Level of Supervision Required

- 8.1 A Supervisor must assess each situation where prescribed electrical work will be carried out by a person under Supervision and determine the appropriate level of Supervision needed. The factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:
- a) the type of prescribed electrical work to be undertaken;
 - b) the experience of the person under Supervision in the type of prescribed electrical work to be undertaken;
 - c) the Supervisor's experience in working with the person under Supervision and confidence in their abilities;
 - d) the number of persons the Supervisor is Supervising;
 - e) the work environment where the prescribed electrical work is to be completed, including potential hazards; and
 - f) general safety considerations.
- 8.2 The Supervisor should consider the decision of Judge Tompkins in the District Court in the case *Electrical Workers Registration Board v Gallagher* (Te Awamutu, 12 April 2011) where the Judge stated at paragraph 24:
- “As is made apparent by the definition of "supervision" in the Act, that requires control and direction by the supervisor so as to ensure that the electrical work is performed competently, that appropriate safety measures are adopted, and that when completed the work complies with the requisite regulations. At the very least supervision in that context requires knowledge that work is being conducted, visual and other actual inspection of the work during its completion, assessment of safety measures undertaken by the person doing the work on the site itself, and, after completion of the work, a decision as to compliance of the work with the requisite regulations.”
- 8.3 Key elements from the decision which a Supervisor must consider include:
- a) control and direction by the Supervisor to ensure safety, competence and compliance;
 - b) knowledge the work is being conducted;
 - c) visual and other actual inspection during its completion;
 - d) assessment of safety measures; and
 - e) a decision on compliance.
- 8.4 A Supervisor must decide if the work is compliant in accordance with the testing provisions of the Act and ESR 2010.
- 8.5 A Supervisor should be prepared to determine whether prescribed electrical work should not be carried out under Supervision because of safety, competency or compliance requirements.
- 8.6 A person carrying out prescribed electrical work under Supervision should be encouraged to raise any safety, competency or compliance concerns with their Supervisor or employer at any time.

Control and Direction

- 8.7 Employers should take all practical steps to ensure that any person under Supervision who is carrying out any prescribed electrical work will be under effective Supervision.

- 8.8 Control and direction by a Supervisor is a continual process that requires active Supervision of a person under Supervision throughout the undertaking of prescribed electrical work.
- 8.9 The following steps should be considered by a Supervisor prior to allowing a person to undertake prescribed electrical work under Supervision and issuing that person with instructions:
- a) Visit the site and assess the workplace and work environment; and
 - b) know and understand:
 - i. the prescribed electrical work to be undertaken;
 - ii. the materials to be used;
 - iii. the equipment and tools to be used;
 - iv. any site specific and work specific safety factors;
 - v. the work environment and who they will be working with and for, and the risk of others influencing the work of or the decisions of the person under Supervision; and
 - vi. the person under Supervision's ability on the day and whether any factors might impair their ability.
- 8.10 Clear and precise instructions should be issued which include how the Supervisor will ensure safety, competence and compliance. If necessary, instructions should be in writing.
- 8.11 Supervisors should make it clear to a person under Supervision that they must seek advice from their Supervisor if they are in any doubt about the prescribed electrical work to be undertaken or workplace safety.

Safety of Person under Supervision

- 8.12 Regulations 100 and 101 of the ESR 2010 impose safety responsibilities on persons under Supervision, their Supervisors and their employers.
- 8.13 Regulation 100 imposes responsibilities on the person carrying out prescribed electrical work. If a person under Supervision is carrying out prescribed electrical work under Supervision, then the safety obligations under Regulation 100 must be met by both the person under Supervision and the Supervisor. Regulation 100 provides:

100 Safety responsibilities of person who carries out work

- (1) *A person who carries out any prescribed electrical work, or any work referred to in clause (2)(e) to (h) of Schedule 1, must take all practicable steps, —*
 - (a) *before beginning the work, to check that any associated equipment and personal protective equipment to be used by that person is in good order and condition, and is safe for its intended use; and*
 - (b) *to follow the procedures approved by the employer (if any) for the work to be carried out; and*
 - (c) *to use the associated equipment and the personal protective equipment provided in a competent manner;*
 - (d) *to comply with AS/NZS 4836 or the certified design for all electrical work carried out on electrical equipment operating at low or extra-low voltage.*
- (2) *The responsibilities set out in this regulation of a person carrying out work are in addition to, and do not limit, the responsibilities of that person under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.*

- 8.14 Particular attention should be given to the requirements of AS/NZS 4836 – Safe working on or near low-voltage electrical installations and equipment.
- 8.15 Regulation 101 imposes direct obligations on employers of persons who carry out prescribed electrical work. It provides:
- 101 Responsibility of employers for safety of employees*
- (1) An employer who employs a person to carry out any prescribed electrical work, or any work referred to in clause (2)(e) to (h) of Schedule 1, must take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of the employee while carrying out the work, and must take the steps described in subclauses (2) and (3) in particular.*
 - (2) The employer must take all practicable steps to—*
 - (a) provide safe working procedures for employees to follow when carrying out the work; and*
 - (b) ensure that any associated equipment and personal protective equipment used by an employee is arranged, designed, made, tested, inspected, and maintained so that it is safe for the employee to use.*
 - (3) The employer must take all practicable steps to ensure that the employee who carries out the work—*
 - (a) has adequate knowledge and experience of the type of work being carried out; and*
 - (b) has been adequately trained in the safe use of the associated equipment, the personal protective equipment, and the procedures for carrying out the work; and*
 - (c) immediately before the start of the work, checks that the associated equipment and personal protective equipment is in good order and condition; and*
 - (d) uses the equipment and the procedures that the employer has approved for the work.*
 - (4) Subclause (3)(a) does not apply if the employee is in training and the employer ensures that the employee is adequately supervised to ensure the safety of the employee.*
 - (5) The responsibilities of the employer set out in this regulation are in addition to, and do not limit, the responsibilities of the employer under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.*
- 8.16 Employers and Supervisors must ensure that they have all necessary systems, processes and procedures in place to meet their safety obligations under Regulations 100 and 101 of the ESR 2010 and their general obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.
- 8.17 Safety considerations should include:
- a) site or client specific safety requirements;
 - b) site hazards, toolbox and/or tail gate briefings or requirements;
 - c) having current personal protective equipment available;
 - d) the tools and equipment to be used;
 - e) the physical conditions at the site;
 - f) any likely changes to the physical conditions as work progresses;

- g) whether electrically live exposed fittings could be contacted while work is in progress; and
- h) the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Knowledge of Person under Supervision and of Supervisor

- 8.18 The Supervisor must ensure the person under Supervision has adequate training, knowledge and experience of the prescribed electrical work to be carried out.
- 8.19 Supervisors should not Supervise work that is not within their competence. While the Supervisor's class of registration may allow them to Supervise the prescribed electrical work, if they are not familiar and confident with the type of work themselves then they should not Supervise a person to carry out that type of work.
- 8.20 Where a person under Supervision only has limited knowledge or experience with the type of prescribed electrical work to be undertaken, then the Supervisor should provide a closer and more detailed Supervision.
- 8.21 A Supervisor should not place a person under Supervision in a situation where they do not have adequate knowledge, skill or experience to deal with the:
 - a) prescribed electrical work to be undertaken;
 - b) any safety requirements; and
 - c) other circumstances at a work site.
- 8.22 A Supervisor must provide instructions to a person under Supervision to enable them to carry out prescribed electrical work in a safe, competent and compliant manner and such instructions should, depending on the level of knowledge, skill and experience of the person under Supervision, include:
 - a) site and health and safety instructions;
 - b) how the prescribed electrical work is to be carried out;
 - c) fittings to be installed (if any) and how to install them, including any manufacturers' instructions and/or declarations of conformity;
 - d) relevant regulations and codes to be complied with;
 - e) methods of electrical isolation, testing and earthing;
 - f) procedures in relation to the use of locks for personal protection against electric shock and safety tags;
 - g) equipment to be used and how to use it;
 - h) personal protective equipment to be used and how to use it (including verifying that it is current);
 - i) the limits of the prescribed electrical work the person under Supervision can carry out; and
 - j) procedures to follow in the event the person under Supervision requires assistance or clarification.

Inspection of Person under Supervision's Work

- 8.23 A Supervisor is responsible for ensuring any prescribed electrical work carried out by a person under Supervision is competently completed and compliant. To ensure this a Supervisor must inspect, test and verify any prescribed electrical work undertaken by a person working under their supervision.

- 8.24 Inspection should take place as the prescribed electrical work is being carried out as well as on completion.
- 8.25 Testing and verification of prescribed electrical work must occur on completion and prior to certification.
- 8.26 All prescribed electrical work completed by a person under Supervision must be certified by either a Certificate of Compliance or by an Electrical Safety Certificate issued by the Supervisor (as per the requirements of the Act and ESR 2010).
- 8.27 A person under Supervision cannot inspect or certify prescribed electrical work.

9. Person Under Supervision's Responsibilities

- 9.1 Before carrying out any prescribed electrical work any person under Supervision should understand:
 - a) who their Supervisor is;
 - b) the limits of the prescribed electrical work they can do;
 - c) the health and safety requirements for the prescribed electrical work; and
 - d) the Supervisor's instructions on how the prescribed electrical work is to be carried out.
- 9.2 A person under Supervision must take all practical steps to ensure their own safety and safety of others while carrying out prescribed electrical work including:
 - a) ensuring personal protective equipment to be used is in good order and condition and is safe for its intended use;
 - b) ensuring all equipment to be used is in good order and condition and is safe for its intended use;
 - c) taking all practical steps to follow the instructions set out by the Supervisor and or employer in relation to health and safety; and
 - d) taking all practical steps to carry out the prescribed electrical work in a safe manner.
- 9.3 A person under Supervision should know who their Supervisor is at all times while carrying out, or assisting with the carrying out, prescribed electrical work.
- 9.4 A person under Supervision should understand and follow their Supervisor's directions and instructions at all times.
- 9.5 A person under Supervision should carry out work assigned by a Supervisor in a competent manner and in a manner that complies with the requirements of the Act and the ESR 2010.
- 9.6 A person under Supervision should ask their Supervisor if they do not understand any instruction or if they are unsure how to carry out any prescribed electrical work assigned.
- 9.7 A person under Supervision should refuse to do any prescribed electrical work if they feel unsafe or where they do not consider they have the required competence or the necessary Supervision to carry out the work in a safe, competent or compliant manner.