RECI NEWS

Regulation of Electrical Contractors
CER Criteria Decision Document Published

The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) has recently published its decision on the criteria for the regulation of electrical contractors in Ireland. This document sets out the Commission's rules for the regulation of electrical contractors with regard to safety, under the provisions of the Energy (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act.
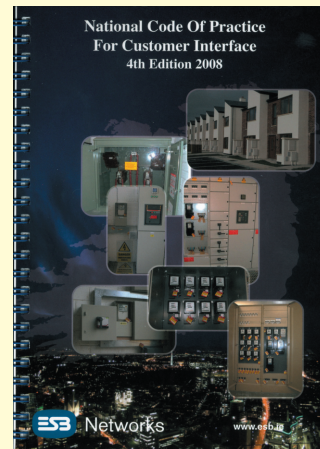
The publication of this decision paper is further to the Commission's consultation on the matter. The Commission received substantial and detailed comments on its proposals, and submissions were received from eight parties. These were as follows:—

1) Council for Registered Gas Installers (UK) (CORGI);
2) Dublin City Council;
3) Electrical Contractors Association (ECA);
4) Electrical Contractors Safety and Standards Association (ECSSA);
5) The Electro Technical Council of Ireland (ETCI);
6) ESB Networks (Distribution System Operator or DSO);
7) Institute of Electrical Inspectors in Ireland (IEII);
8) Register of Electrical Contractors of Ireland (RECI).

The Commission has attempted to respond to each of the detailed comments received and these are set out in their Response Document. The Criteria Decision Document and the Response Document can be viewed on the CER website — www.cer.ie. Click on **electrical** then click on **safety** then click on **decision documents** and then click on **criteria for the regulation of electrical contractors — CER decision published date 25/04/08**.

The CER recently asked for expressions of interest in the process for the designation of an Electrical Safety Supervisory Body or Bodies. Any organisation wishing to be considered had to complete a pre-qualification questionnaire and submit to the CER by the 25th April 2008. The purpose of the pre-qualification questionnaire is to obtain information from interested parties to enable the CER to make an assessment of whether or not each candidate is qualified to act as an Electrical Safety Body. We expect that stage two of the process will commence in the next few months.

New ESB Networks Interface Book Launched

National Code Of Practice
For Customer Interface
4th Edition 2008

ESB Networks   www.esb.ie

See next page for full details

Electronic Completion Certificate System Improvements

New search facility for contractors

The ETCI have recently made some changes to the Completion Certificate System and also incorporated some improvements, requested by RECI. ETCI Cert No. 1 is renamed 'Completion Certificate for Electrical Installations Less than 50kVA Installations' and the ETCI Cert No. 2 is renamed 'Completion Certificate for Electrical Installations greater than or equal to 50kVA Installations'. The MPRN number system will only allow the correct certificate to be used. The maximum import capacity must be entered on ETCI Cert No. 2. This value must be between 50kVA – 630kVA. This new terminology will be applied to ETCI paper certificates in the near future.

Sub-System Certificates
Cert No. 2 has the new option to enter associated sub-system certificate numbers in the comments box. The user is asked to state if there are sub-systems related to the installation. If the user chooses "No" the message displayed states: *Are you sure that there are no sub-systems in this installation. If there are sub-system certificates they must be in your procession before you complete the certificate.* The user is requested to enter all sub-system certificate numbers into the comments box of the certificate.

Sending Certificates to ESB
The user can now create a certificate and choose to either submit it to ESB Networks or NOT. The user is presented with a pop-up information dialog box which states: *Option 1 — Submit new certificate to ESB Networks.* Option 1 will complete the certificate and submit the new certificate to ESB Networks for action. This option should only be used when additional involvement of ESB Networks is required at the customer location.
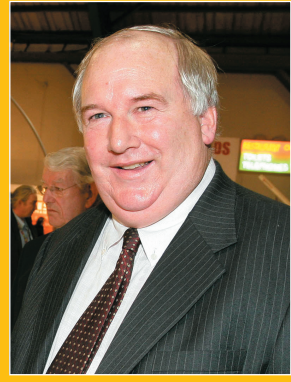
Continued overleaf

The National Code of Practice at Customer Interface

Jim Keogh

Standards Manager
Customer Interface

ESB Networks

The National Code of Practice Group is scheduled to launch a new edition of the National Code of Practice for Customer Interface in early May. This is the 4th Edition of these requirements which were originally launched in January 1992. The purpose of the publication is to have one single interpretation of ESB Networks requirements for the customer interface throughout the entire country. It is a consensus document agreed between people involved in the electrical industry and ESB Networks. The Electrical Industry in this context means: Contractor Associations; Consulting Engineers; Switchboard Assemblers; Electrical Wholesalers; Distributors; the Regulatory Bodies; and ESB Networks staff. All concerned have made a very positive contribution in the compilation of this and previous codes of practice down through the years.

Within ESB Networks the task of discussing the issues and preparing the content is the responsibility of the Code of Practice Group. It is their job to sift through all the inputs, suggestions and even critical comments that arrive for consideration from the various interest groups who use the code in their day-to-day business. All opinions/ideas are discussed, and only after careful consideration, is the decision made to accept or reject the various inputs received. As with every standards publication it is not always possible to incorporate all suggestions received by the code group for a variety of reasons. The basis for each decision made by the group is the target "least cost, safe, technical solution." When this

underlying principle is applied to suggestions made, some unfortunately are not accepted.

It is most important that all who work at the customer interface are familiar with the content of the current code. This is to ensure that equipment/assemblies accepted for use at the interface do not compromise the safety of present and future users, thereby, ensuring persons are not exposed to additional/ unnecessary risks which are unacceptable in the present day. Other issues that could arise due to non compliance with the code may be:
❐ Delays at energisation;
❐ Costly last minute modifications that could have been avoided if the code requirements had been observed;
❐ Revenue Protection Issues.

The latest version of the Code is required because of changes that have occurred in the electrical industry over the last few years. To allow new requirements to be incorporated into the code the launch date has been extended out to May 2008.

Because of the need for periodic updates it has been decided that the "Latest Code" will be available at www.esb.ie/esbnetworks/ncp. Readers of the paper version will be reminded at the bottom of each page that the latest code is available at this address as it is important that everyone has the current version to hand. To aid readers the website will have a log of all the changes made, such as page number, date of change, and description of the

change. This will reduce the need to browse the entire book every time the web page is checked for the latest version. It will also reduce the need to print the entire contents of the code and so by consulting the "Log of Changes" the reader will be able to print the specific modified changes only, thereby saving on paper and ink and contributing to our 'green' policy.

Following the launch there will be a nationwide briefing to ESB Networks staff, Electrical Contractors, Switchboard Assemblers and other key stakeholders on the content of the code, with particular emphasis being placed on the major changes from the previous edition. These sessions will be invaluable to attendees as they will offer the opportunity to understand the background to some of the changes and will provide a conduit for feedback to the code group.

In keeping with ESB Networks quality work policy, the latest code book standards will be added to the Construction Quality Audit Programme. The ongoing audit process will ensure a consistent approach by all to the code requirements throughout the country.

As this may be the last paper version, it is important to repeat for all users of the code to ensure that they have the up-to-date version.

In addition to the logged changes on the website, ESB Networks will advise the Regulatory Bodies and other key stakeholders when any updates occur.

Electronic Completion Certificate System Improvements (cont.)

Option 2 — Create new certificate for customer and records only. Option 2 will complete the certificate but the new certificate will not be issued to ESB Networks. This option should only be used where additional involvement of ESB Networks is NOT required at the customer location.

Other Improvements
A contractor may now amend their mobile

phone number when completing a new certificate. This facility should be useful when you require the text message from ESB to go to different people in your organisation on different occasions.

The restriction of two print copies of a new certificate has now been removed. You can print as many copies as you wish.

The requirement to enter a minimum

number of lighting points, socket outlets or fixed appliances on the ETCI Cert No.1 has been removed, but at least one of the three types must have an entry of one or more.

A search facility for contractors has been provided. By clicking on 'View Certs' on the first page the user can now search for a certificate under cert number (ID) MPRN number, a date range, address and county.

Certification of Fire Alarms & Emergency Lighting

Kilkenny Fire Service have expressed their concerns to RECI regarding the low standard of knowledge in relation to IS:3218 and IS:3217 among some electrical contractors. We have been requested to inform all registered contractors who are involved with the design, installation, commissioning, and testing and maintenance of fire detection and alarm systems, and emergency lighting systems of the concerns expressed by Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service.

Kilkenny Fire Authority is of the view that members of the NSAI registration scheme would be preferable, and may be more suited to be the designers, commissioners and certifiers of fire detection and alarm systems in high-risk premises ie: Purpose Group 2a type premises, ie hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools. If improvement is not observed by Kilkenny Fire Authority over the next months it will consider issuing a fire service order stating that it will only accept certificates of compliance from designers, commissioners and certifiers of fire detection and alarm systems in these high-risk premises who are accredited by this NSAI scheme.

Emergency Lighting Systems IS:3217
Some model forms as per IS:3217 submitted to Kilkenny Fire Authority state that the premises is compliant with IS:3217 and compliant with section 6.6 and 6.7. Inspecting Fire Officers found these premises not to be compliant on various counts. Kilkenny Fire Service Authority regard these active engineering systems as 'Life Safety Systems' and suggest that registered contractors give these critical 'Life Safety Systems' equal respect.

Section 18 (2) of the Fire Service Acts 1981 as amended, is quoted as follows: It shall be the duty of every person having control over premises to which this section applies to:
(a) Take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire on such premises;

(b) Provide reasonable fire safety measures for such premises and prepare and provide appropriate fire safety procedures for insuring the safety of persons on such premises;

(c) Ensure that the fire safety measures and procedures referred to in paragraph (b) are applied at all times;

(d) Ensure as far as is reasonably practical the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire whether such outbreak has occurred or not.

A person convicted of an offence under the above may be liable to a maximum fine of €130,000 and/or imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years.

Merger of Gas & Electrical Safety Bodies in the UK

The Electrical Safety Council and the Council for Registered Gas Installers (CORGI) are in discussions about a possible merger. "I am genuinely excited by the proposed merger. This is a great opportunity for both parties" said Jim Spiers, Director General of the Electrical Safety Council. "If we get this right, the combined charities can become a really influential and respected body for UK electrical and gas safety issues. There's a huge amount of detail to work out, but I see this as a positive move for everyone in their respective sectors.

"For trades people, we will see better co-operation and co-ordination in the delivery of messages about safety, and for consumers, we want to be able to give even greater clarity and confidence about where to go and what to do to ensure that suppliers of services are registered and trusted. For me, the combination of the two charities makes enormous sense."

The Electrical Safety Council and the CORGI Trust have similar aims of promoting and supporting electrical and gas safety in the UK respectively. Both are independent, non-profit making organisations which are supported by a wide range of stakeholders from their respective industries. The Electrical Safety Council deals with all electrical safety matters on behalf of consumers. The CORGI Trust, which was set up in 2005, is funded by the commercial activities undertaken by the CORGI Services Group.

ETCI Fourth Edition Seminars

Details of regional seminars have been posted on the ETCI website — www.etci.ie. During October and November 2008 these seminars on the Fourth Edition, National Rules for Electrical Installations, ET101 will be available in ten locations throughout the country. More information on this will be issued by ETCI later.

Regional seminars on Fourth Edition National Rules for Electrical Installations ET101:—

❑ 30th September 2008 — Dublin (North City);
❑ 2nd October 2008 — Dublin (South City);
❑ 8th October 2008 — Limerick;
❑ 9th October 2008 — Kilkenny;
❑ 22nd October 2008 — Cork;
❑ 23rd October 2008 — Killarney;
❑ 5th November 2008 — Galway;
❑ 6th November 2008 — Mullingar;
❑ 19th November 2008 — Sligo;
❑ 20th November 2008 — Carrickmacross.

'Test Only' Completion Certificates

Contractors who submit completion certificates ticked "Test Only" should explain in the comment box the reason for this. Otherwise the RECI staff have to telephone the contractor for this information which can lead to delay.

One Year & Going Strong

RECI continues to support industry information website Voltimum Ireland

Over 1000 RECI members have registered to use Voltimum's helpful website. It's completely free to use and easy to navigate. Voltimum Ireland has been online for just over a year and has support from RECI, leading manufacturers and industry associations. Looking for an industry expert to answer a tricky technical question? Or perhaps you want to browse through over 21,500 products from leading manufacturers in an easy-to-use online catalogue?

Voltimum is your one-stop website for information covering all areas of the Irish electrical industry. You can also register to receive free newsletters covering the industry's breaking news along with a monthly webTV news report. Check it out now on www.voltimum.ie.

Annual General Meeting

The 16th Annual General Meeting of the Register of Electrical Contractors of Ireland will be held on Saturday the 28th June 2008 at11.30am at KCR Industrial Estate, Kimmage, Dublin 9.

New Edition of IS:3217 Emergency Lighting

Time for public comment on the draft of the new addition of IS:3217 is now over. We expect that the new Code of Practice will be published in the near future.

The new Code of Practice states that qualification requirements for persons designing and commissioning emergency lighting systems are that they shall hold a certificate of completion of an approved emergency lighting design and commissioning course and have completed a nationally recognised and approved training course. The NSAI are currently designing an appropriate course which will be FETAC approved.

Portable Appliance Testing

The ETCI have launched a new publication ET215: 2008, Guide to the Maintenance Inspection and Testing of Portable Equipment (electrical appliances and tools) in the Workplace. Statutory requirements are now in place (since November 2007) with regard to the maintenance, inspection and testing of portable equipment used in the work place. This guide is intended to help employer's meet their statutory duties in this regard. The guide is available as a free download from the ETCI website www.etci.ie or alternatively RECI will send you a free copy if requested.