

Electricity Industry Bulletin No: 70 September 2008

FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL ELECTRICAL WORKERS

1. TAFE TASMANIA GRADUATION AND AWARDS PRESENTATION

Leigh Walker was the proud winner of the Best Electrotechnology Apprentice - Regulatory Compliance Award presented at the TAFE Tasmania trade graduation and award celebration evening held on 25 June 2008 at Wrest Point. The night acknowledged the achievements of apprentices who had completed their trade apprenticeship with prizes and certificates being awarded to recognise excellence among the trades. Statewide 92 people graduated with Certificate III in Electrotechnology Systems Electrician and 28 electrician apprentices received awards. To recognise Leigh's outstanding achievement, he was presented with an electrical insulation testing instrument, which he will be able to put to good use in his career as an electrician.

Electricity Standards *and* Safety invest significant time and resources into supporting the development of apprentices for the Institute of TAFE Tasmania Electrotechnology program. With so much attention focussing on skills shortages and the low number of apprenticeships available, Electricity Standards *and* Safety are proud to be part of this excellent initiative, as well as a contributing sponsor of the 2008 TAFE Tasmania Awards. Electricity Standards *and* Safety congratulate Leigh on his outstanding achievement and look forward to continued involvement in the apprenticeship program.



Pictured from left: John Hammersley (Electricity Standards and Safety, Chief Electrical Inspector) presenting award to Leigh Walker winner of Best Electrotechnology Apprentice - Regulatory Compliance Award

2. OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING ACT 2005 - DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATIONS

The *Occupational Licensing Act 2005* provides a uniform licensing framework for the electrical, plumbing and gas fitting trades. Work is proceeding on developing regulations, codes of practice, determinations, orders, approved forms and notices for various areas affecting these three occupations. The electrical regulatory package is nearly complete and documents have been placed on the WST Website (http://www.wst.tas.gov.au/industries/licensing/ola_info) to obtain the views of those affected. The deadline was the end of August, but if you have any comments please let us know because improvements and new ideas are always desirable.

The following are the draft documents in the electrical regulatory package:

(a) Occupational Licensing (Electrical Work) Regulation 2008

- have been added to since it was last posted;
- lineworkers and cable jointers will now have to apply to be licensed to do their type of work and those effected should read carefully the provisions bringing them into the licensing regime. (Please refer to Item 3)

(b) Occupational Licensing (Fit and Proper) Code of Practice 2008

- sets out the matters that will be considered by the Administrator in whether licence holders under the Act (and some others) are "fit and proper" to be granted and retain a licence under the Act.

2. OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING ACT 2005 DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATIONS (CONT'D)

(c) *Occupational Licensing (Supervision of Prescribed Work) Code of Practice 2008*

- sets out what is required of those supervising persons in training to be electrical workers.

(d) *Occupational Licensing (Electrical Work) Code of Practice 2008*

- sets the standards to which electrical work must be performed;
- covers the reporting of non-compliant electrical work.

(e) *Occupational Licensing (Electrical Work) Determination 2008*

- sets the types of licences open to those doing electrical work;
- establishes the qualifications to hold each class of licence;
- covers the electrical work each class may perform;
- follows the national uniform scheme for these matters.

(f) *General Insurance Notice 2008*

- governs the insurance that must be held by those (mainly contractors) performing electrical work.

(g) *Occupational Licensing (Exemption of Inspection, Erection and Staking Work of Poles, Towers and Structures) Order 2008*

- will exempt those who undertake inspection, erection and staking work at ground level on poles, towers and structures from the requirement to be licensed under the Act when they work for a licensed electrical contractor;
- those who contract for this work must have a contractor's licence under the Act, a nominated manager and the appropriate insurance cover.

(h) *Occupational Licensing (Classification of Electrical Work and Defective Electrical Work) Determination 2008*

- sets out the types of electrical work that must be notified before or after it is commenced and before or after it is energised;
- sets out the types of defective electrical work that is required to be notified to the Administrator by an authorised officer and other types of defective electrical work.

3. OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING ACT 2005 LICENCE IMPLEMENTATION FOR LINWORKERS AND CABLE JOINTERS

The implementation of the *Occupational Licensing Act 2005* will bring change where lineworkers and cable jointers (who perform electrical work, as defined in the Act) will need to be licensed like electricians. Electricity Standards *and* Safety will attempt to contact all relevant employers/businesses that undertake line work or cable jointing activities, to initiate licence applications.

To assist with the roll out of the legislation, lineworkers and cable jointers will initially be exempt from licensing for a 3 month phase in period. After this time lineworkers and cables jointers who work without holding a licence, will be in breach of the Act.

During the phase in period, employers of lineworkers and cable jointers will be responsible to ensure that these workers apply to Electricity Standards *and* Safety to be licensed. Once Electricity Standards *and* Safety receives a licence application from a lineworker or cable jointer, the applicant will be issued a "transitional licence" for a given period, not exceeding 15 months. There will be no fees payable for the transitional licence.

Before the expiry of the transitional licences, licence holders must pay the prescribed licence fee and may need to provide additional information to support their application. Electricity Standards *and* Safety will send out renewal notifications prior to transitional licences expiring.

It is important that all employers of lineworkers and cable jointers ensure their employees are suitably licensed in accordance with the new legislation.

Exemptions to licensing will include work associated with the inspection of poles, towers and structures and the staking and replacing of poles from ground level. Please note, employers of individuals that undertake these exempt activities, need to be aware that their business will be required to hold an "electrical contractors" licence.

Further information on the Occupational Licensing Regulations and Determinations can be obtained from the Workplace Standards Tasmania website:
(http://www.wst.tas.gov.au/industries/licensing/ola_info).

Comments should be put in writing and mailed to:

Workplace Standards Tasmania, PO Box 56, Rosny Park, TAS, 7018 or e-mailed to: wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au

4. MANAGING VEGETATION AROUND POWER LINES—SAFELY

Trimming, pruning, clearing trees, shrubs and other plants near overhead power lines is critical for the safe and reliable supply of electricity. Any vegetation that encroaches on the overhead conductors can create the potential for a fire and for people or animals to receive an electric shock should they touch the vegetation.

Aurora Energy, the largest owner of overhead conductors in Tasmania, works closely with the vegetation management companies it contracts to, to maintain safe vegetation clearances around overhead power lines.

Recently three of these companies experienced serious incidents during routine operations, when tree branches and limbs came into contact with overhead power lines.

As a result, Aurora suspended all vegetation management activities; notified inspectors at Workplace Standards Tasmania - Electricity Standards *and* Safety; and convened a state-wide workshop with its contractors to discuss the issues and develop solutions.

Hydro Services Tasmania Pty Ltd is one of Aurora's vegetation management contractors and has conducted its own investigation into one of the recent incidents where a limb touched an overhead power line as it was being cut down. While no one was hurt, the potential for injury was high.

This investigation revealed that certain issues — such as risk assessment, power line safe approach distances, power line suppression, placement of safety equipment when arriving at the work site, and tree trimming methods — required further attention, training and assessment.

Hydro Services Tasmania invited Electricity Standards *and* Safety and Workplace Standards Tasmania inspectors to observe some of the assessments undertaken with its workers as they carried out tree trimming activities. All Hydro Services Tasmania workers were assessed, before a relevant training program was provided. The training (provided by ArborTrim Australia Pty Ltd) is being progressively rolled out to all Aurora's contracted vegetation management companies.

The inspectors involved praised the effort and co-operation between Aurora and their contractors to control identified problems and improve safety.

The commitment to improve training and work practices for accessing overhead power lines for vegetation management, with an emphasis on building knowledge, understanding and control of the associated electrical hazards, will have positive outcomes for all involved.

The owner of the overhead power lines and conductors have an obligation to manage the vegetation around lines and conductors. Vegetation management requirements are detailed in the Office of the Tasmanian Energy Regulator's Distribution Powerline Vegetation Management Code of Practice.



Pictured from left to right: Paul Kilby (Workplace Standards Inspector, Ben Millward (Hydro Services Tasmania worker), Garry Thyer (ArborTrim trainer/ assessor), Bradley Foley, Ben Clark, Airon Denwer-Ripper and John Prewer (Hydro Services Tasmania workers)

For further information regarding working safely near overhead power lines, call the Workplace Standards Tasmania Helpline on 1300 366 322 for your free copy of A Guide to Working Safely near Overhead Power Lines (GB137) or go to www.workcover.tas.gov.au and search for GB137.

5. CORRECTLY LABEL MAIN SWITCHES AND THE LOCATION OF THE MAIN SWITCHBOARD

A recent incident highlighted the need to clearly indicate the location of a building main switchboard. The Tasmanian Fire Service recently attended an alarm call at a Hobart educational campus and entered via the ground floor. There was a door located in the ground floor foyer marked "switchboard" and after gaining access the fire officers turned off a switch marked "MAIN SWITCH" on that switchboard. They had unknowingly only isolated the ground floor light and power circuits but the alarm was indicating a fire on the lower ground floor. The assumption was that they had isolated the whole building because it was marked 'MAIN SWITCH'.

5. CORRECTLY LABEL MAIN SWITCHES AND THE LOCATION OF THE MAIN SWITCHBOARD (CONT'D)

When the source of the alarm was located, there was a fire in a skip bin and the fire had spread to electrical circuits that had not been isolated.

Had the location of the main switchboard been labelled in accordance with the Wiring Rules, then the safety of fire service officers and the occupants of the building would not have been put at risk. Fires can spread rapidly so it is imperative that fire service officers isolate supply and gain swift access to the cause of an alarm.

The current 2007 edition of the Wiring Rules, clause 2.9.2.4 clearly states the options for non-domestic buildings i.e. (i) at each entrance to the building or (ii) at the Fire Indicator Panel.

There is a second issue to clarify. The switch on the distribution board was marked "MAIN SWITCH" when it was not the building main switch. To avoid this confusion, only main switches on the main switchboard shall be marked as such. Refer to clause 2.3.3.4. The main isolator on a distribution board should not be labelled using the words "MAIN SWITCH" (unless it is located in an outbuilding in accordance with clause 2.3.4.1).

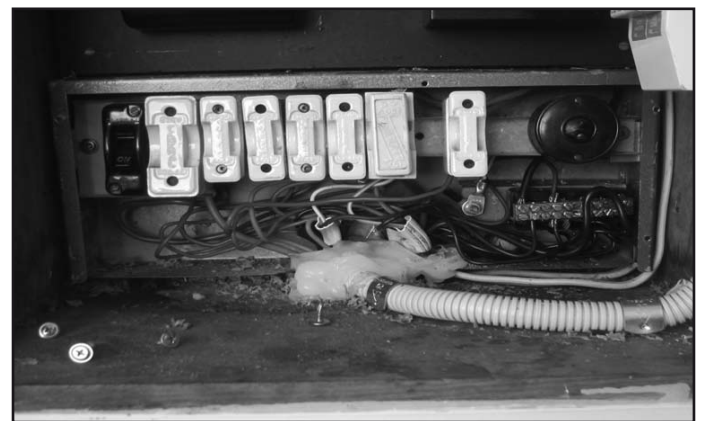
6. FIRE RATING OF SWITCHBOARDS AND CABLE ENTRIES

Recent inspections have revealed that a number of electrical contractors have not been correctly fire rating switchboards and meter boxes. Several electrical contractors have been attempting to comply with the rules, but are using non fire rated products e.g. Silicone and other gap fillers.

Rule 2.9.7 in AS/NZS 3000:2007 is clear in the requirements of the size of the gap and suitable methods to be used.

Regarding fire rating, please ensure that the surface behind meter panels is suitably protected, including the inside of wooden cleats.

The photos below show what an inspector found recently. Despite the poor workmanship, the silicon used to fill the hole was of a type that actually sustained the flame.



Electrolux Dishwasher recall has been re-published.

Airflow 3 in one bathroom heater/fan/light unit recall has been extended and re-published.

23/4/2008	Tempo Mezzo and Maison Sandwich Makers (Model FS-8009)
29/5/2008	Pathfinder series-PF10F Halogen Emergency Luminaire and Aurora-AU24M EXIT sign series
17/6/2008	LG Dishwashers (Model LD-14AW2, LD-14AT2)
8/7/2008	Tempo Collectio 2000W Combination Flat and Upright Heater (Model NSB-200J)
16/7/2008	LG Microwave Oven (Model MS2346VR, MS2347GR)

For further recalls and precise product information, defect details and consumer action, visit the Product Recalls Australia website at www.recalls.gov.au



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