

Energy

BULLETIN

Office of **ENERGY WA**

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Revision of the “WA Electrical Requirements”

The Office of Energy is currently undertaking, in consultation with industry, a review of the *WA Electrical Requirements* (WAER) with a view to updating the content to current requirements on a statewide basis.

The document was last issued in 1993 and it is therefore timely for a full review to be carried out.

It is one of the key documents called up by the Regulations and in brief, it provides a statement of the technical requirements that an electrical contractor must satisfy, to ensure that the electricity supply authority is able to:

- connect a new or modified consumer’s electric installation to the electricity supply network in a safe, effective and efficient manner; and
- correctly meter and record (by way of meter readings etc) the electricity consumed.

As many will know, in 1993 industry adopted the current WAER as an authoritative set of service rules applicable in all parts of WA. This is an important principle that we believe should also be the basis of the revised WAER. Not only is it efficient for contractors, consultants and supply authorities to have one set of “requirements”, but it also provides confidence that work complying with clear and transparent “requirements” will be connected.

Increasing competition in the electricity supply industry will eventually see more companies entering the electricity supply network operating and management business. Thus, there will be more “electricity supply authorities” (as we currently call them) in the future. It makes good sense therefore, we believe, to have one consistent set of “requirements” applicable to all networks, rather than have a unique set for each network.

Furthermore, the installation of service connections and routine metering facilities is likely to become a contestable service in the future. It therefore also makes good sense in that respect too, we believe, to have a consistent set of “requirements” and avoid unnecessary variations between different networks.

As part of the industry consultation phase, a wide range of industry associations and selected organisations have been sent drafts for comment by the end of August 1999.



ALBERT KOENIG
DIRECTOR OF ENERGY SAFETY

Review of Part VIII of the Electricity Act Regulations 1947

Part VIII of these regulations is well out of date and also needs to be reviewed. It deals with "Supply Authority Service Rules", a subject related to the WAER (see article on page 1).

The regulations are mainly of interest to Electricity Supply authorities and industry associations, hence drafts for comment have been sent to them, as part of the consultation phase being conducted by this office.

TTMRA for Gas Appliances

The Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement continues to occupy the time of regulators in Australia and New Zealand. For some time now the Australia New Zealand Gas Technical Regulators Committee (GTRC) has been looking at ways in which restrictions on free trade in domestic/commercial gas appliances between Australia and New Zealand might be eased.

At this stage, there is still a Special Exemption in force which prevents, for example, New Zealand appliances being sold in Australia without Australian (generally AGA) approval.

Initially there were strong indications that Australia and New Zealand's positions were incompatible and the differences were beyond resolution. However, recent negotiations, involving regulators and industry organisations on both sides of the Tasman, suggest that there may be common ground.

In broad terms, the Australian position reflects that of the Office of Energy, that there must be, in the interests of consumer safety, point-of-sale control of gas appliances. New Zealand, on the other hand, does not envisage pre-sale independent certification, relying more upon declaration of compliance by the supplier supported by a formal requirement for test reports from a recognised laboratory to be held by the supplier, and an enforcement regime of post-sale auditing and incident monitoring by the regulator.

Whilst these may at first sight seem to be opposing views, there are enough similarities

in outcome to suggest that, when the relative risks associated with various types of appliances are realistically taken account of, a compromise will be found which does not adversely affect safety.

The GTRC will continue its efforts to resolve the differences, which at this stage from a WA perspective, would involve New Zealand moving towards the system proposed by Australian States, and anticipates being able to report positive progress later this year.

A GTRC meeting is planned in Perth during October 1999.

Seminar - Quality, Reliability and Safety of Electricity Supply

The Institution of Engineers, Australia is conducting a one day seminar on topical electricity supply issues. The seminar will cover the following areas:

- transmission and distribution network quality, reliability and safety issues
- views of Independent Power Producers
- matching the supply to the consumer's installation
- present standards and state codes
- classification of power quality disturbances
- overseas trends
- case studies
- the legal issues that industry participants face and what issues need to be addressed prior to any event occurring.

In respect of safety issues, some developments are taking place at the national level. The seminar is designed to inform customers, consultants, network operators and power producers of the issues and latest developments including regulatory proposals.

The seminar will be held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor on Friday 3 September 1999.

For further information, please contact Karen, Hawkins Institution of Engineers, Australia, telephone (08) 9321 3340 fax (08) 9481 4332 e-mail khawkins@ieaust.org.au

The Western Australian 'Citizen of the Year Awards – Spirit of WA (A Triumph of Spirit) Award

The inaugural Spirit of WA (A Triumph of Spirit) Award was awarded to the Office of Energy at the recent 1999 Western Australian Citizen of the Year Awards.

Staff of the Technical & Safety Division of the Office of Energy were active during the recent cyclones and floods in the Exmouth and Moora areas. Deputy Director Energy Safety Kevan McGill was involved in the State Emergency Management Advisory Committee and the State Operations Coordinating Group managing the crisis. Electrical Inspectors Roger Parrin and Bob Lawrence were deployed to Moora to assist with restoration of electricity supplies to the area.

In conferring this award upon the Office of Energy, the Chairman of Celebrate Western Australia included in the citation the following words:

The Spirit of WA Award honours the amazing spirit of the group of unsung heroes and heroines from the organisations that swung into immediate action to manage the preparedness, response and recovery operations of the recent Exmouth, Moora and surrounding districts disasters.

The electrical contracting industry and LPG suppliers were also involved in restoring services in the towns and surrounding areas in the wake of the cyclones and floods. The Office of Energy commends those organisations and individuals for their contributions. One clear message that came through was that energy services are a critical part of a modern community.



Electrical Inspector Roger Parrin receives the award for the Office of Energy, from The Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC MC and The Premier of Western Australia, The Honourable Richard Court MLA.

New Look Australian Standards

Beginning this month, you'll notice a new look to Australian Standards. Gone are the garish yellow covers; gone are the insipid blues of joint Standards. Instead, all new Standards will be published with simple, elegant ivory covers. Thicker cardboard is being used, and in combination with the new design, it provides a more contemporary look and feel to Australian Standards.

A further change is Standard Australia's move to print-on-demand, a system under which around 95% of approximately 6000 Standards will be instant-printed the moment an order is received. It's a powerful and highly automated system, which eliminates out-of-stocks, wastage, and warehousing. Instant-print Standards will be presented as side-stapled books.

New Standards Australia Office

The new premises of Standards Australia at 165 Adelaide Terrace, Perth (Phone No 9221 6800) will be officially opened by the deputy Premier, the Hon Hendy Cowan MLA, on 12 August 1999. Standards Australia is already trading from the premises.

The most popular electrical and gas standards are also available from the Office of Energy at Leederville.

Closure of Western Power's Testing Laboratory

Western Power recently announced that its Electrical Appliance Testing Laboratory would be closed.

Western Power had conducted a review of various operations of its organisation. One of the outcomes of the review was that the services provided by the testing facility were commercially unsustainable, despite the rationalisation of the services and the amalgamation of its functions with Western Power's Standards Laboratory.

The closure of the Laboratory occurred on 31 July 1999. Clients who require testing facilities are being referred to testing laboratories in other States.

Appliance "approvals" (which rely on test reports being available) are still being carried out by the Office of Energy.

For enquiries on articles in this Energy Bulletin, please contact Harry Hills, Office of Energy:

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The Office of Energy website is located at:

www.energy.wa.gov.au

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The AGA Gas Convention

The 35th Annual Australian Gas Association Convention and Exhibition will be held from Sunday 17 October 1999 to Tuesday 19 October 1999 at the Hyatt Regency Perth, 99 Adelaide Terrace, Perth.

The theme “Natural Gas – Adding Value to Australia’s Future” is particularly relevant as gas infrastructure increases its economic contribution to Australia’s future. This gathering will be a valuable opportunity to assess the present standing of the gas industry within Australia, and to share ideas for enhancing its continuous growth.

The Australian Gas Association is bringing together an impressive array of both domestic and international speakers, including representatives from the United States and the United Kingdom. These speakers will focus on issues including cogeneration, energy retailing, energy sector competition, and environmental considerations. Principal Engineer Mel Stokes of the Office of Energy will be giving a paper on “Complex Type B Gas Appliance Certification”.

The AGA Convention is not often held in Perth, so this is a good opportunity for catching up with the latest information and trends in the gas industry. For more information, contact The Convention Secretariat of the AGA on 9322 6662 or 9322 6906.

Electrical Industry Excellence Awards-Office of Energy Sponsorship

The Electrical Contractors Association WA *Electrical Industry Gala Ball and Excellence Awards Presentation* will be held at Rendezvous Observation City Hotel, Scarborough on Saturday 11 September 1999.

The ECA WA Excellence Awards recognise the achievement of excellence by electrical contractors. The Office of Energy is pleased to again be a Major Sponsor of the awards. For the first time, the awards this year will include a category for electrical safety.

Call Liz at the ECA on (08) 9321 8637 to get more details and make a booking.

The Master Plumbers Association Awards-Office of Energy Sponsorship

“Winning a Master Plumbers’ Award for Excellence is like wining an Oscar,” says MPA President, Rob de Joode.

The “Awards for Excellence” Gala Dinner, is undoubtedly the highlight of the Plumbers and Gasfitting Industry calendar in Western Australia. The purpose of the Awards is to encourage and reward outstanding achievement by final year plumbing and gasfitting apprentices, and licensed plumbers and gasfitting practitioners, Western Australia.

The Office of Energy is pleased to again be a sponsor of these awards, in the gasfitting category.

The 1999 Awards Gala Dinner and presentation evening will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, Perth, on Saturday 23 October 1999. Present will be the competitors, industry operatives and industry representatives. Approximately 350 people will attend this prestigious event. Tickets for this night of nights will go on sale soon. Contact the MPA Office on 9272 5244 for information.