

## Electrical Safety



### Background

The Energy (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2006, granted the CER powers in relation to electrical safety. The CER then consulted with the general public as to how best the scheme for the regulation of electrical contractors should be operated. This process led to the publication of the Criteria Document in 2008. This sets out the detailed rules and obligations for participants operating within the electrical safety regulatory scheme.

In late 2008 the CER appointed two bodies to act as electrical Safety Supervisory Bodies (SSBs) and to carry out the day-to-day operation of the scheme - the Electrical Contractors Safety & Standards Association Ireland (ECSSAI) Ltd and the Registered Electrical Contractors of Ireland (RECI) Ltd. Both SSBs were appointed to fulfil the safety function on behalf of the CER (on a not-for-profit basis) for a period of seven years from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009, replacing the self-regulatory model operated previously. The CER remains responsible for policy decisions regarding electrical safety and the operation of the regulatory scheme.

### Safety Supervisory Bodies

Both SSBs must ensure that electrical contractors who wish to become registered are competent and attain all of

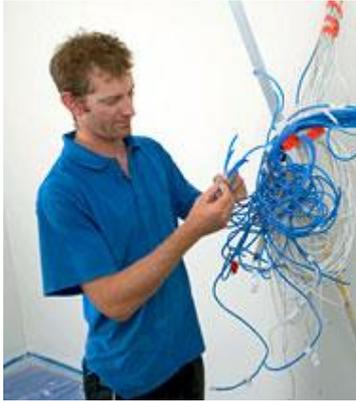
the required criteria, as set out under the rules of the scheme.

The SSBs are responsible for ensuring that each Registered Electrical Contractor (REC) is assessed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating in line with the appropriate national safety standards and technical rules relating to electrical installation works. The SSBs are also responsible for distributing and processing certificates that a REC must issue to a customer once the electrical work is complete. In addition both SSBs are responsible for dealing with queries and investigating complaints received by customers about RECs.

### Registered Electrical Contractors

All RECs are required to have in place insurance cover and are required to certify all electrical work completed by them in all sectors, e.g. domestic, commercial, industrial etc. Each REC who is registered with one of the SSBs is required to demonstrate that they or an employee who certifies the electrical work has obtained a recognised National Craft Certificate as an electrician (or another suitable electrical qualification), completed an electrical verification, testing and certification course and has insurance cover as specified by their respective SSB.

A complete list of Registered Electrical Contractors operating in Ireland is available on the Safe Electric website [www.safeelectric.ie](http://www.safeelectric.ie). The Safe Electric scheme promotes and highlights the safety benefits associated with the use of Registered Electrical Contractors in Ireland. RECs are registered, insured and must issue a certificate. Only RECs may display the Safe Electric logo.



### **What are “Controlled & Restricted Electrical Works”?**

A cornerstone of the electrical safety scheme is the concept of Controlled and Restricted Electrical Works, defined as follows:

#### **Controlled Electrical Works**

Controlled Electrical Works are works that require certification if completed by a REC. While the CER recommends that RECs are hired to complete this work it is not a legal requirement that only RECs can carry out controlled work.

It is through this system of certification of controlled works that the CER and by extension the SSBs ensure that the work carried out reaches the required safety standards and Technical Rules, so when a customer hires a REC to carry out work they can have peace of mind.

Minor electrical works remain outside the scope of Controlled Electrical Works; these include very small works such as like-for-like replacements (e.g. switches), moving light fittings without affecting the circuit and adding a socket to an existing circuit.

#### **Restricted Electrical Works**

Restricted Electrical Works **under the 2006 Act are defined as electrical work that can only be carried out and must be certified by a REC.**

Restricted Electrical Works encompass electrical work in a domestic premise. For the complete definition see Appendix 1.

From 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2013 anyone wishing to carry out Restricted Electrical Works must be registered under the Safe Electric scheme.

Parties that carry out Restricted Electrical Works, but are not registered with an SSB, will be subject to prosecution

This is designed to protect the safety of individuals and property in domestic premises, where statistics reported by fire authorities for the years 2000 to 2006 indicate that electrical installation faults are the cause of approximately 8fires per week in Ireland.

#### **Related documents**

Please see the following documents for more information.

[Criteria for the regulation of electrical contractors \(CER/13/098\)](#)

[Definition for the scope of Controlled Electrical Works \(CER/09/009\)](#)

[Definition for the scope of Restricted Electrical Works \(CER/13/147\)](#)

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## Appendix 1: Definition of Restricted Electrical Works

Restricted Electrical Works; this involves restricting the carrying out and certification of all Controlled Electrical Works in a domestic setting to RECs with no legal exemption for the Owner or Occupier.

As set out in Statutory Instruments, S.I. No. 264 of 2013, Restricted Electrical Works are:

1. the installation, commissioning, inspection and testing of a new Electrical Installation which is fixed, fastened or mounted or otherwise secured so that its position does not change and requires connection or re-connection to the distribution network or the transmission network, as the case may be;
2. the modification, installation or replacement of a Distribution Board including customer tails on either side of the Main Protective Device or of an Electrical Installation in any of the special locations listed in Part 7 of the National Rules for Electrical Installations, as the case may be;
3. the installation or replacement of one or more circuits in an Electrical Installation, including the installation of one or more additional protective devices for such circuits on a Distribution Board; or
4. the inspection, testing or certification of, or reporting on, existing Electrical Installations covered by Chapter 62 of the National Rules for Electrical Installations;

in a Domestic Property.

Minor electrical work remain outside the scope of Restricted Electrical Works (see document CER/13/147 for definition of minor electrical works).

Consequently, the following installations remain as Controlled Electrical Works (and require Certification if completed by a REC), but are not classified at this time as Restricted Electrical Works:

- Installations in Potentially Explosive Atmospheres;
- Work in a commercial or work place setting including MV and HV connection and installations;
- Construction site electrical installations;
- Electrical installation within exhibitions; shows and stands;
- Agricultural and horticultural installations;
- Public Lighting and associated cabling.

## Definition of Controlled Electrical Works

Controlled Works are major electrical installation works (including additions, alterations and/or extensions) which are covered by the National Wiring Rules and which involve:

1. the installation, commissioning, inspection, and testing of a new fixed electrical installation requiring connection or reconnection to the electricity network;
2. the installation or replacement of a Distribution Board or Consumer Unit, or new installation in special locations as defined in Part 7 of the National Wiring Rules ET101 and ET105;
3. the installation or replacement of one or more extra circuits in an existing installation, including the installation of one or more additional protective devices for such circuits on a distribution board;
4. Subsystems installed in Commercial, Industrial, and Domestic installations where the installation falls within the remit of the National Wiring Rules;
5. The inspection, testing and certification of existing electrical installations (in accordance with Chapter 62 of the Wiring Rules (ET 101 –Fourth Edition- 2008 and to conform with Regulation 89 of SI No 732 of 2007).