

Electricity (Licensing) Amendment Regulations 2017

Regulation 50 - Electrical Work, Supervision of

Proposed amendments

Background

EnergySafety is concerned about the growing number of apprentices who have received an electric shock or have been electrocuted while carrying out electrical work.

Unannounced site inspections have also revealed that electrical contractors are not providing a satisfactory level of supervision of apprentices and persons in training which is a prime cause of the shock incidences that have been reported (sometimes not reported).

It is proposed to amend regulation 50 of the Electricity (Licensing) Regulations 1991 about the supervision of electrical work so that there is a clear definition of direct supervision and general supervision and to clarify the responsibilities of the employer and the supervising electrical worker regarding apprentices and persons in training.

Concurrently, other amendments to the Electricity (Licensing) Regulations have been drafted that will prohibit the carrying out of electrical work on energised electrical installations. The proposed amendments have been circulated to stakeholders for comment prior to publication in the Gazette. These proposed amendments have been prepared with the other proposals in mind.

Proposed amendments

1. Commencement

These regulations commence –

- a) if the Occupational Safety and Health and Electricity Licensing Amendment (Live Work) Regulations 2017 have commenced, on the day of publication; or
- b) if the Occupational Safety and Health and Electricity Licensing Amendment (Live Work) Regulations 2017 have not commenced, on the day the Occupational Safety and Health and Electricity Licensing Amendment (Live Work) Regulations 2017 commences.

2. Insert the following statement at the start of the regulation –

Terms used in this regulation –

direct supervision means supervision where, to the extent reasonably practicable, a supervising electrical worker remains on the same work site as the apprentice, is able to converse easily with him/her and can oversee and verify the electrical work being performed by the person under training to ensure it is being carried out correctly and safely.

general supervision means supervision where a supervising electrical worker, after paying due regard to the trainee's work history, his or her competence as assessed through on-the-job performance, work site conditions and the scope and complexity of the electrical work to be carried out, may, after the initial site

attendance, attend the work site at regular intervals to verify the work is being correctly performed and in a safe manner. The supervising electrical worker must also attend site on completion of the electrical work to verify the work undertaken by the trainee.

3. In subregulation (3)(b) delete the words "*whether or not live wires or live electrical equipment are, or is, or, are or is likely to be involved, in the electrical work or in the area in which electrical work is being carried out*" and insert in their place "if the electrical work will be on or near electrical equipment or wiring that is normally energised or could be energised". This change is to simplify the subregulation and to provide for working on or near an energised electrical installation.
4. In subregulation (3)(d) delete the words "*live wires or live electrical equipment are, or is, or, are or is likely to be involved, in the electrical work or in the area in which electrical work is being carried out*" and insert in their place "if the electrical work will be carried out on or near electrical equipment or wiring that is normally energised or could be energised," and insert "reasonably" before "practicable". This change is to simplify the subregulation and to provide for working on or near an energised electrical installation.
5. In subregulation (3)(e) insert "(i)" after "electrical worker" and include the rest of the subregulation in that clause. Create a new clause in the subregulation "(ii) if the persons being supervised are apprentices, shall ensure the number of persons being supervised by the supervising electrical worker does not exceed three at any one time and the supervising electrical worker is working at the same site as the apprentices; and". This change specifies the maximum number of persons that the supervising electrical worker will be allowed to supervise.
6. In subregulation (3)(g) insert at the end of the clause "including, but not limited to, safety glasses, non-flammable clothing and arc-flash protection equipment, as appropriate to that type of work." This change provides information regarding the type of safety equipment that the employer must provide for use by the apprentice.
7. At the end of subregulation (3) insert -
 - (h) if the persons being supervised are apprentices and are in the first or second year of their apprenticeships, shall ensure the apprentices do not perform any electrical work unless under direct supervision of the supervising electrical worker;
 - (i) if the persons being supervised are apprentices and are in the third, fourth or final year of their apprenticeships, shall ensure the competencies of the apprentices are assessed prior to general supervision being administered and the supervising electrical worker attends site on a regular basis to monitor the apprentice.
8. In subregulation (4)(a) delete the words "*whether or not live wires or live electrical equipment are, or is, or, are or is likely to be involved, in the electrical work or in the area in which electrical work is being carried out*" and insert in their place "if the

electrical work will be on or near electrical equipment or wiring that is normally energised or could be energised”. This change is to simplify the subregulation and to provide for working on or near an energised electrical installation.

9. In subregulation (4)(c) delete the words “*live wires or live electrical equipment are, or is, or, are or is likely to be involved, in the electrical work or in the area in which electrical work is being carried out*” and insert in their place “if the electrical work will be carried out on or near electrical equipment or wiring that is normally energised or could be energised,” and insert “reasonably” before “practicable”. This change is to simplify the subregulation and to provide for working on or near an energised electrical installation.

10. In subregulation (4) insert –

(f) must ensure that –

- i) all wires or electrical equipment that persons being supervised will, or are likely to, come in contact with in carrying out the electrical work are, or is, isolated from all possible sources of electricity by means of an isolation device or devices; and
- ii) the isolation device or devices is, or are, identified both visually and by test as being the device or devices necessary and sufficient to provide electrical isolation and is, or are, secured in the open position, or zero energy state, in such manner as to prevent the isolated or electrical equipment (as the case may be) from becoming energised; and
- iii) when the isolation device or devices has, or have, been locked a danger tag is attached to it or them, to indicate that their status must not be altered; and
- iv) the isolated wires or electrical equipment (as the case may be) are tested to confirm they are not energised;
- v) the isolated wires or electrical equipment (as the case may be) are, where appropriate, bonded to earth; and
- vi) if the persons being supervised are apprentices and are in the first or second year of their apprenticeships, the apprentices do not perform any electrical work unless under his/her direct supervision
- vii) if the persons being supervised are apprentices in the third, fourth or final year of their apprenticeships, he/she assesses the competencies of the apprentices prior to administering general supervision and he/she attends site on a regular basis to monitor the apprentice he/she is supervising.

These changes relate to electrical work carried out on or near an energised electrical installation. [refer to proposed regulation 55 in the Occupational Safety and Health and Electricity Licensing Amendment (Live Work) Regulations 2017]

11. After subregulation (4) insert –

(5A) A holder of an electrician's training licence in the 4th or final year of training may carry out fault finding and testing on energised wiring and electrical equipment

under direct supervision from, and in close proximity to, a supervising electrical worker.

This clause provides for an apprentice to carry out fault finding and testing on energised wiring and electrical equipment which is otherwise not allowed under proposed regulation 55(3).