

# AECI NEWS



The Voice of the Electrical Contracting industry

January/February 2010

## AGM

**SATURDAY  
20<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2010  
MALDRON HOTEL  
PORTLAOISE  
CO. LAOIS**



YEARS



## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (1960 - 2010)

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Our Association being the "Recognised Voice" of the Electrical Contracting Industry are holding our **AGM** in The Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise on Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at 11am.

We strongly urge all our Members to please make the effort to attend.

It is intended to highlight and discuss many important issues effecting our Industry, i.e. REA, EPACE, CWPS, NSAI, High Court/Labour Court proceedings and your contribution on issues such as Government Contracts and Prequalification documents would be welcomed.

After **50 years** representing a large portion of the Electrical Contracting Industry the Recognised Voice of the AECI is stronger than ever.

While we are very much aware of the extremely poor state of our economy, the drastic effect on our Member's business and in particular the Construction Industry, we may never find the timing so perfect as now to lay a proper foundation for the Electrical Contracting Industry to prepare their companies for an improved economy in the near future.

A total change in the Executive Committee and Officers is taking place. We would ask all those interested in putting their names forward for a position on the Executive Council to please contact us with your details.

## Inside this issue

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Visit us at [www.aeci.ie](http://www.aeci.ie)

January/February 2010

## AECI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AECI will be holding its AGM on Saturday, the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at the Maldron Hotel (Midway Complex), Portlaoise starting at 11.00am (same venue as last years' AGM).

This is an opportunity for all AECI Members to openly discuss the many issues related to the state of our Industry and all Members, **paid up**, before the start of the AGM, (11am on the day) are eligible to attend and vote.

A show of support to the Officers and the Executive Council who give their time unselfishly for the good of the Electrical Contracting Industry would be much appreciated.



## AECI SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please note the different categories of Membership to allow you to calculate what your 2010 Subscription would be.

<b>SOLE TRADER</b>	<b>€250.00</b>
<b>2-5 EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>€400.00</b>
<b>6-14 EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>€600.00</b>
<b>15+ EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>€830.00</b>

As all companies are experiencing difficult trading times economically the AECI Head Office is very grateful for Members who have paid the 2010 Subscriptions already.

We would encourage all others to submit their payment as early as you can to assist our cash flow in these particularly difficult times dealing with Government Bodies, TEEU etc. to achieve the aims of our Members.

## VERIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION TRAINING

Every Registered Contractor must employ at least one Qualified Certifier. Only Qualified Certifiers are allowed to sign completion certificates. Each Qualified Certifier must attend a recognized Verification and Certification training course and/or be assessed every three years. Therefore Registered Contractors or their

Qualified Certifiers must comply with this rule from now on for processing of completion certificates. We intend to run our Verification and Certification course on a more frequent basis and any Qualified Certifier who has not been on a course in the last three years should arrange to attend one as soon as possible. On completion of the course you will be issued with a number and this number must be entered on Completion Certificates after your signature.



# FORMER PRESIDENTS OF THE AECI

1960-1969	R. S. Simonds	1988-1989	Maurice Burke
1969-1970	J. Dillon	1989-1991	Michael Moran
1970-1971	D. O'Sullivan	1991-1994	Tommy Heffernan
1971-1972	J. Hopkins	1994-1996	Sean Dungan
1972-1973	J. Keatinge	1996-1998	Shelagh Ennis
1973-1976	A. Sweeney	1998-2001	Mattie Ryan
1976-1977	John Ryan	2001-2003	Gerard Goggin
1977-1979	Seamus Elmore	2003-2005	Jack Hegarty
1979-1981	Michael Moran	2005-2008	Dermot McClannon
1981-1983	T. C. Duignan	2008-2010	Jack Hegarty
1983-1984	P. J. Fox		
1984-1985	John Ryan		
1985-1988	Brendan Hall		



## LABOUR COURT HEARING

A Hearing to register a variation to the REA (Registered Employment Agreement) was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009 and 19<sup>th</sup> February 2010 and on both occasions AECI requested a postponement and also reiterated their stance that our Members are not in favour of any rate increase for the foreseeable future. AECI would be in favour of a New fully restructured REA. And an indept discussion will take place at the AGM and may result in a Ballot.

## POST CONNECTION TESTS - ENFORCEMENT

Post connection testing is an essential requirement to prove that the various protective devices will operate satisfactorily in the event of a fault. A prime objective of the new regulatory system is to ensure that the post connection tests are satisfactorily completed by registered contractors for every single new installation and extensions to installations i.e. for Controlled Works. In the last issue of RECI news we gave the CER definition of Controlled Works.

This definition is also included in the RECI yearbook and diary. You can also look at the RECI newsletter on our website [www.reci.ie](http://www.reci.ie).

### New Completion Certificates

ETCI in association with the CER have made some minor amendments to the Completion Certificates and there is also a fourth copy provided. This copy is to be sent by the contractor to RECI after the post connection tests have been carried out and been found to be satisfactory. Contractors who have unused completion certificates can continue to use them but must make a photocopy and send this to RECI when the post connection tests have been completed.

The CER have instructed that this procedure must be implemented from January 2010 and we are therefore advising you that you must send a copy of the completion certificate to RECI after the post connection tests.

### Enforcement

Not only will the contractor be obliged to send the post-connection certificate to RECI but the customer will also be held responsible for their electrical installation and non-compliance will lead to deenergisation of supply. Enforcement is a critical aspect of regulation and seeks to ensure that the requirements of the regulatory model, as specified by the CER, are adhered to in the interests of safety. Its objective is to offer adequate incentive to customers to arrange for the completion of Post-Connection Tests and ensure that new electrical installations are safe. The customer is, ultimately the party that is primarily affected by the safety of the installation, has an interest and a responsibility with regard to the safety of an electrical installation, and is in control of the appointment of parties for the carrying out of any electrical installation work. Where the customer fails to comply within a reasonable time with the directions issued by the Safety Supervisory Body (RECI) with regard to an installation which has been discovered to be in breach of the connection conditions (with respect to the failure of the installation to be in compliance with the technical rules) ESB Networks will deenergise the connection to the Networks in accordance with the specified procedures. If a contractor does not submit the final certificate with the Post Connection Tests entered within a defined period after the certificate is processed (35 days) the Safety Supervisory Body (RECI) will contact the contractor to check the position.

If no satisfactory response or explanation is received within five days, an Enforcement Notice is issued to the contractor (with a copy to the customer) giving him/her a further five days to submit the final certificate or rectify the noncompliances. If not rectified within five days the issue is referred to an Authorised Officer. The Authorised Officer will contact the customer and point out the breach of connection conditions and unless immediately rectified (i.e within five days) ESB Networks will be contacted to de-energise the connection.

Common Procedures The CER have published Common Procedures for the following:

- Certification
- Third Party inspection
- Change of Contractor
- Enforcement
- Transfer of registration
- Modification

These procedures were described in the last issue of RECI News.

They may also be viewed on the RECI website [www.reci.ie](http://www.reci.ie).

Extract from RECI NEWSLETTER, January/February 2010

# LATE PAYMENTS ARE DAMAGING SMALL BUSINESSES

**THE PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE  
A LOAN GUARANTEE SCHEME  
FOR SMES COINCIDES  
WITH THE RELEASE OF LATE  
PAYMENT STATISTICS FROM  
THE SMALL FIRMS ASSOCIATION**



**Late payments** are strangling small firms, with the average payment in Ireland now taking 75 days, the Small Firms Association (SFA) has said. According to the SFA's Winter Credit Survey, it now takes on average 75 days from the time a firm issues an invoice to the date it is settled, which is up from 66 days in its Autumn Survey. "Late payment causes major problems for firms, imposing unnecessary administrative burdens, and in this current climate when cash is the lifeblood of small firms late payments can result in insolvency," says SFA director Patricia Callan.

## **RISE IN COST OF DOING BUSINESS**

The survey also showed that 64% of Irish small firms indicate that late payment impacts on their cash flow, with 48% of firms in the past three months having experienced an extension of credit terms taken by clients. "The result is that the cost of doing business will increase, as many companies will have to resort to debt finance, such as overdrafts, to facilitate their cash-flow requirements," Callan explains. "That is they can actually get it," she adds, as 22% of respondents reported a decrease in working-capital availability from the banks over the past three months, and 14% reported an increase in the cost.

## **EU RULES ON LATE PAYMENT**

According to the SFA, despite the introduction in 2002 of the EU Directive on Late Payment in Commercial Transactions Regulations – which allows companies to automatically charge interest penalties on accounts outstanding beyond 30 days following the date of receipt of invoice, or of goods or services – the average payment period in Ireland is still extremely high and is one of the slowest payment durations in Europe. "While the Late Payment Regulations allows for an interest penalty to be automatically applied to overdue payments, only 16% of respondents to our survey have late payment charges in their terms and conditions. This indicates that most firms avoid applying an interest penalty for fear that it could jeopardize long-standing business relationships or result in clients moving their business," Callan says.

## **HSE ABUSING DOMINANT POSITION**

"Furthermore, as the regulations allow companies to contractually agree their own terms, and therefore effectively exempt themselves from the 30-day payment period, what we are finding is that government semi-states and large companies are effectively abusing their dominant purchasing position and deciding what payment period they themselves want," Callan says. "It is appalling that the HSE, in its terms and conditions, has set out a payment period of 45 days, in direct contravention to commitments given by An Taoiseach and An Tánaiste that all central government departments will pay their bills within 15 days and all other state bodies and local authorities will pay within 30 days," she adds. The SFA is calling on the Government to not just instruct the HSE to pay its bills to small businesses within 30 days, but to move to have the entire extended government sector to pay all bills within 15 days. It is also calling for a Small Claims Court for business-to-business transactions to allow small companies to pursue outstanding debts without going through lengthy and costly civil court proceedings.



# OFTEN WHEN WE HAVE GONE INTO SEE COMPANIES IN TROUBLE, THEY ARRIVED

## IT MAY SEEM LIKE A DIRTY WORD

but **insolvency** is now a reality in the Irish business landscape and it's important for business owners to know how to deal with it to minimize damage to themselves and their stakeholders.

Fewer companies went out of business in Ireland in January 2010 compared to December 2009, according to a report released this month by [Insolvencyjournal.ie](http://Insolvencyjournal.ie). The report reveals that the number of business insolvencies fell 34% from 156 (five a day) to 103 (three a day). The January figures are still 20% higher than those recorded in January 2009, however.

Ken Tyrrell, manager at Kavanagh Fennell, which facilitates [Insolvencyjournal.ie](http://Insolvencyjournal.ie), says there could be a seasonal factor involved. "Insolvencies are historically higher in December; this coupled with the bad weather during the traditional January sales means it's hard to tell if this trend is going to continue. We need to look at this again after the first quarter."

The construction sector remains the worst hit in terms of business failures with 32 such firms going bust in January, representing one third of the total for the month. "The services and retail sectors were the second-highest areas of failure, followed by hospitality and manufacturing. But manufacturing has survived a bit better than people may have thought," says Tyrrell.

According to *A Practical Guide to Insolvency*, published last year by Chartered Accountants Ireland (CAI) and written by Kavanagh Fennell, it was during the latter stages of 2008 that the full extent of the downturn became clear with the figure for insolvencies almost doubling to 721. By the end of the second quarter of 2009, there had already been 703 insolvencies. The total for 2009 was 1,328.

The interesting thing with this latest report is the increase in receiverships, which was over 20 in January, as banks increasingly moved to have receivers recover their debts, notes Tyrrell.

## WARNING SIGNS

*If you're running a business, when should you start to get concerned about the possibility of insolvency?*

"If a company is in trouble there are a number of signs for company directors to watch out for: falling market share and turnover, making losses, increase in debtor days, increase in creditor days, overdrafts maxed out, cash-flow difficulties and increase in bad debts," explains Tyrrell.

"Directors have to do a couple of things when this happens. Get a true, clear picture of the financial health of the company, which means solid, reliable information from your books and records. You need to work closely with your accountant or auditor. Often when we have gone into see companies in trouble, they arrived at that position due to a lack of planning – they didn't see what was coming and didn't have accurate information to react in time."

Once you have your information intact, there are two real tests to establish whether the business is insolvent or not: the cash-flow test is measured according to Section 214 of the Companies Act 1963: basically it dictates that if you can't pay €1,000.00 to a creditor within 21 days you're classified as insolvent. The balance-sheet test classifies your business as insolvent if liabilities are greater than assets. The cash-flow test is probably the most important and most commonly used measure. If you can't pay debts as they fall due, technically you may be trading insolvently," says Tyrrell.

You can make a petition to wind up a company if it owes you €1,000.00 for 21 days, however, Tyrrell says in practice much larger amounts are involved - €40,000.00 and upwards – whenever petitions are made. He notes that the petition process should not be seen as a debt-collection tool as the court will not look favourably on this.

If you decide you're insolvent, you next need to figure out if you can trade on without increasing the amount you owe to creditors. "You have to be very careful not to make the position of the creditors worse than it is at the moment. The duty of care of the board of directors switches from shareholders to creditors in this scenario," says Tyrrell.

"If you decide to trade on, directors need to meet regularly [monthly if not more frequently], keep detailed minutes of those meetings and review the decision to trade frequently. At that stage, directors should be fully aware of their responsibilities to all stakeholders of the company – it's important to seek specialist professional advice."



# AT THAT POSITION DUE TO LACK OF PLANNING - THEY DIDN'T SEE WHAT WAS COMING AND DIDN'T HAVE ACCURATE INFORMATION TO REACT IN TIME.

In 2001, legislation was passed so that a liquidator was obliged to report to the Director of Corporate Enforcement on the collapse of the company and the conduct of the directors within six months of his or her appointment. If an investigation reveals unsatisfactory behavior, a director runs the risk of being restricted for five years.

An example of unsatisfactory behavior would be fraudulent preference, whereby the company pays certain creditors in preference to other creditors in the weeks before liquidation, says Tyrrell.

He warns that if cash-flow problems are the reason why you're insolvent, it's a lot harder to trade out of that situation and make your creditors' position better (as against it being a balance-sheet issue). "You have to pay wages and a certain amount to suppliers. This was less of a problem when there was more credit available and extended credit lines."

## **INSOLVENCY – THE OPTIONS**

If the directors decide that the company is insolvent, there are a few options to consider, bearing in mind that you have to secure the assets of the company for the benefit of creditors.

"Probably the most positive option is examinership with the hope of survival. With the lack of investment and credit available, survival after examinership is a lot harder now – it had a success rate of 90% in 2000-06, but this dropped to below 50% last year for companies petitioning for court protection," says Tyrrell.

There are four things you need when going into examinership: an investor, a viable business, good management and stakeholder support. The process can allow you to reach a compromise with creditors.

For example, you owe Revenue €100,000.00, get investment from outside and agree to pay a certain percentage of the amount.

During the past few years in successful examinership, the dividend payment to preferential creditors has been between 20-25% and around 10% to unsecured creditors. "If one of your creditor's classes agrees to whatever compromise you propose, this can mean the business can survive in to the future with a different owner," says Tyrrell.

Criteria to get into the examinership process are being more strictly interpreted by the courts, which was re-emphasised in February when Mr Justice Peter Kelly turned down the Stokes brothers' examinership application for their private members' club residence. "Because it's a High Court process it doesn't necessarily suit smaller SMEs. You'd need a turnover of €2m or more just to absorb the costs," Tyrrell comments.

Creditors' voluntary liquidations tend to be the most common route with insolvencies, accounting for 82% of the total January, while there were only two court-appointed liquidations that month.

"In the case of creditors' voluntary liquidation you pull down the shutters and send letters to all creditors giving them 10 days' notice to meet with a liquidator. Any assets are then sold for the best price possible and creditors are paid according to preference. In most cases unsecured creditors (i.e. suppliers) don't tend to get paid."

In the case of a court liquidation, the company itself, a creditor, shareholder or director can make a petition to wind up a company. "It has the same fundamental principles as a creditors' voluntary liquidation but is managed in association with the High Court. The numbers went up and down last year but the overall total didn't increase by the same level in 2009 as 2008. Court liquidations went up by 20% in 2009, whereas the number of creditors' voluntary liquidations doubled," says Tyrrell.

**The Insolvency.ie website provides updates on what companies are going into liquidation every day, so you can keep an eye on anyone who owes you money, Tyrrell notes.**





# EMERGENCY LIGHTING IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



NSAI

A number of years ago the NSAI was approached by Industry experts and regulators to update the Emergency Lighting standard I.S. 3217. During the course of the updating process it became apparent that the Standard needed the support of a training program and registration scheme to ensure the competence of practitioners and confidence in the quality of the installations.

To this end NSAI instigated a training scheme for Designers and commissioners/inspectors. NSAI also formed a steering committee of industry experts and regulators to develop a registration scheme.

## Training

**Route 1** There are two routes available to practitioners. Route one requires people to attend a three day common module and a one day design and/or commissioner module.

**Route 2** In order to facilitate practitioners with many years experience in Emergency Lighting a second route was developed which requires experienced practitioners to assess their own level of competency and attend a one day overview of the current standard, course material and assessment/project requirements. It is expected that this route will be available in May (dates to be confirmed).

Caution: This route is only suitable for those candidates who have significant experience and knowledge of Emergency Lighting systems and I.S. 3217. They should also be capable of self directed study.

All attendees will be required to sit a final assessment and achieve a 70% pass rate. Upon successful completion a NSAI registration number will be issued. This course is currently going through the FETAC award development process and a level six award is expected to be available by mid 2010.

For further information on the training go to: <http://www.nsai.ie/Our-Services/Training.aspx>.

The most frequently asked questions about the training are:

**If I Do The Design Module Does That Mean I Am Qualified And Able To Practice As An Emergency Lighting Designer?** No, not on its own. I.S. 3217:2008 Annex B.2 specifies other qualification requirements to enable you to practice as an emergency lighting designer.

**If I Do The Commissioning Module Does That Mean I Am Qualified And Able To Practice As An Emergency Lighting Commissioner?** No, not on its own. I.S. 3217:2008 Annex B.4 specifies other qualification requirements to enable you to practice as an emergency lighting commissioner.

**Can I Qualify As Both A Designer And Commissioner?** Yes, you must attend the common module whether you are a designer or a commissioner. The designer module and commissioner module are held approximately two weeks after the common module and are on successive days so you can attend both if you wish.

**Can I sign all 3 parts of the completion certificate?** Section B.5 of I.S 3217:2008 Annex B states "No one person shall sign all three parts (Design, Installation & Commissioning) of the emergency lighting completion certificates". However this only applies to premises that have more than six emergency luminaries. For premises that have six or less, all three parts may be signed by the one person, but that person must first be qualified to install emergency lighting systems (as defined in Annex B.3 of I.S. 3217:2008) and also must hold a nationally recognised qualification in commissioning emergency lighting systems (as required by Annex B.4 c) of I.S. 3217:2008

## Registration scheme

The objective of the scheme is to:

- establish and maintain a register of competent persons for Emergency Lighting Installations.
- facilitate the issuing of controlled certificates for activities coming under the registration scheme.
- ensure that the requirements of the registration scheme are relevant, realistic and reflect public expectations and are appropriate to current and evolving technology, regulations, Standards, electrical rules and codes of practice.
- promote safety and encourage an awareness of best practice in Emergency Lighting among contractors.
- complement the role of industry and other organisations in their endeavours to meet the standards required for technical competency.
- ensure that persons conducting business within the industry are appropriately registered for the work they are to undertake and to encourage competence and ethical business behaviour for the benefit of the public.
- assist in the resolution of technical complaints between contractors and consumers promptly and fairly by mediation, direction or referral to an appropriate body if necessary.

The registration scheme is still under development and is expected to be available for voluntary participation by mid 2010.



# WIRING RULES - 4<sup>TH</sup> EDITION NOW MANDATORY STANDARDS

As of September 2009, the Fourth Edition of the National Wiring Rules, ET101:2008, came into effect and is now the mandatory standard applicable to electrical circuits supplied at nominal voltages up to, and including, 1000V ac or 1500V dc in domestic, commercial and industrial installations. The rationale for the introduction of the fourth edition is the progression at international level of the harmonisation of wiring standards.

Harmonisation encompasses documentation restructuring, including the introduction of new developments of types of equipment, technical changes and the inclusion of new developments in work and building practices. Over the next three issues will outline the specifics included in this enhanced standard.

Details concerning the renewed impetus from a legislative perspective associated with this publication will also serve to contextualise the significance of the standard for consulting engineers – both electrical and mechanical – as well as for the electrical contracting sector.

This month's article explains the role of the Electro Technical Council of Ireland (ETCI) in the context of the National Wiring Rules, reaffirms the scope of the Rules, and explains the reasoning behind the introduction of the Fourth Edition.



Details concerning the renewed impetus from a legislative perspective associated with this publication will also serve to contextualise the significance of the standard for consulting engineers – both electrical and mechanical – as well as for the electrical contracting sector.

## ETCI

The ETCI is a voluntary body representative of all aspects of electro-technology in the Republic of Ireland. It is the national body responsible for the harmonisation of standards in the electro-technical field, as well as prioritising the promotion of electrical safety.

In conjunction with the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI), ETCI defines and harmonises the standards relating to the practical implementation of safety measures for electrical installations as detailed in "ET 101:2008 – the National Rules for Electrical Installations". The ETCI has also published many other documents to provide clarification for the Industry, including a Guide to the Basic Principles of Electrical Safety (ET 213:2007) and also Good Practice Guide on the Management of Electrical Safety at Work. Figure 1 shows ETCI in context with all relevant national and international standards bodies.

## National Wiring Rules

The National Wiring Rules apply to electrical circuits supplied at nominal voltages up to and including 1000V ac or 1500V dc which form part of installations in residential, commercial, industrial or public premises, or of installations contained in prefabricated buildings, caravans and halting sites, as well as installations for specialised purposes, such as those in agricultural and horticultural holdings.

These rules do not apply to electrical equipment for traction in automobiles or aircraft or on board ships, to installations in mines and quarries, systems for distribution of electrical energy to the public, power generation or transmission for such systems, radio interference suppression equipment or lighting protection of buildings.

## Justification of the Fourth Edition (ET 101:2008)

Since the publication of the Third Edition, the National Rules have maintained alignment with technical and market advances through a number of amendments (ET 101:2000/A1:2000, ET 101:2004/A2:2005). However, there have been changes internationally with major restructuring of the International Wiring Rules and, as such, these changes warrant the publication of a Fourth Edition so that international harmonising of wiring rules in IEC and CENELEC can be implemented.

As members of CENELEC, it is incumbent on ETCI to consider modifications or clarifications made at European level and to either accept or seek the retention of special requirements or "Special National Conditions (SNC)" if technical aspects presented by CENELEC contradict the national position.

# WIRING RULES - 4<sup>TH</sup> EDITION

## SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES

The major changes introduced in the Fourth Edition include changes or new material in the following areas:

### 1. Wiring systems

Changes are contained within Chapters 51 and 52. In chapter 51, the identification and marking of cables has finally been completed. Chapter 52 provides details pertaining to the selection and erection of wiring systems – originally introduced in the second amendment – and specifically in relation to external influences which include corrosive substances and impact;

### 2. Switchgear and accessories

The Department of the Environment (DOE) has specified mounting heights (socket outlets, light switches, control devices and distribution boards) as contained in Technical Guidance Document M of the Building Regulations, Isolation of inaccessible socket outlets (554.3.5) address the requirement of isolation where an appliance needs to be switched-off in the case of malfunction;

### 3. Overcurrent protection

New requirements with regard to harmonics, meter tails, spurs and surge protection are provided. – Cognisance of the current-carrying capacity is required in situations where harmonic currents are prevalent; - The accommodation of the main protective device (of domestic or similar installations) within the ESB cabinet is provided;

### 4. Overvoltage protection

Details pertaining to the provision for overvoltage protection, specifically with regard to surge protection;

### 5. Isolation

Isolation of premises in an emergency has been considerably enhanced to include detail on: - Premises having multiple supplies – Commercial premises – Apartment blocks – Switch rooms (electrical and building requirements) – Devices suitable for instigating isolation;

### 6. Residual current devices

A major change coming about by the introduction of the Fourth Edition is the requirement for a sign at the location for the installation distribution unit to test the RCD on a monthly basis. Clarification on the employment of RCDs in the context of water heating as well as for agricultural situations, temporary installations and exhibitions is provided;

### 7. Special locations/situations

New rules apply in relation to a number of “special locations” (including detail on PV installations (712), as well as clarification on special locations included in the Third Edition is provided such as for bathrooms (701) where detail relating to the application of zones is clarified;

### 8. Verification and testing

#### *Pre-connection tests:*

The insulation resistance values applicable to the tests on final distribution circuits have been increased. Also, a test originally introduced in the 3rd amendment, testing for erroneous connections, has been re-emphasised;

#### *Post connection tests:*

The values associated with tests concerning the fault-loop impedance of final circuits have been de-rated to be cognisant of the thermal effect of increased current levels in cables under fault conditions;

### 9. Periodic inspection reporting and certification

The above aspects detailed within the National Wiring Rules have undergone significant revision and consideration to be inclusive of the increased requirements as outlined in the Criteria Document as specified by CER.



This view expressed in this document represent a personal opinion and should not in any way be construed as a definitive interpretation of ET 101:2008 or indeed ETCI itself. This is not a legal interpretation. In the event of a specific legal question, the reader should consult a practicing solicitor or a member of the Incorporated Law Society.



# ELECTRICAL EMPLOYERS WARN AGAINST STRIKE

ELECTRICAL employers have warned that any follow up to last year's strike over terms and conditions in the industry will only increase the level of unemployment among electricians. The Technical Engineering and Electrical Union (TEEU) has said a decision by the Electrical Contractors Association to reject a 4.9% pay increase in the industry – to which it had initially agreed – had made a strike by 10,500 electricians "inevitable". However, in response, the bodies which represent contractors have claimed any pay increase will add to the ever increasing number of employers who are non-compliant. "The TEEU is going to be told by electricians 'what do you mean you are going to get me an extra €1.50 per hour? I am not getting the original €21 as it is'," said Jack Hegarty of the Association of Electrical Contractors in Ireland which represents 300 small and medium-sized contractors. "There are already people out there being paid €16 by non-compliant companies."

Mr Hegarty's organisation has said consistently for the last number of months that it will not agree to the pay increase. Now he has called for a complete overhaul of the Registered Employment Agreement (REA) which governs pay and conditions in the industry. "It needs to be brought up to the economic realities of today," he said. Mr Hegarty said employers do not want to reduce the pay of their employees but, if the alternative for many is closing down or going non-compliant, then maybe the rate needs to be cut to about €18. Mr Hegarty also called for the two authors of a recent report on the electrical profession, commissioned by Tánaiste Mary Coughlan, to be assigned to the industry so they can oversee its transformation. He said Peter Cassells and Finbarr Flood had proven they had a practical grasp of the industry and he suggested that if they were appointed to oversee the industry for a number of years, they could, for example, create a body of up to 100 inspectors with a level of education in the right areas of the business to improve the compliance of contractors and also have binding powers to monitor the level of compliance.

IRISH EXAMINER, Friday, February 26, 2010 By Stephen Rogers

## SEMINARS

An additional 1 Day Seminar on updated Emergency Lighting and Fire Alarm Detection Standards was held at The Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise on Thursday the 25th February 2010. This was due to a special request from our Members who missed the previous sessions. The changes to Fire Alarm Detection Systems I.S. 3218:2009 has caused a lot of confusion in our Industry. AECI have continued to press the NSAI to confirm definitely where we stand on some issues.

An amendment to I.S. 3218:2009 regarding the types of cables has now been issued to the Industry and where initially the cable requirements was for type PH120 in all systems whereas the amendment confirms that PH120 is only required in special circumstances. The seminar was well attended.



## Fire Detection and Alarm Systems

Certificate Theory/Design and Practical Application Course Based on I.S. 3218:2009  
Course Outlines, Details and Booking – Course No. 2

### Venue:

Springfield Hotel, Leixlip. Commencement date April 13<sup>th</sup> 2010.

### Course duration and cost:

**3-day Certificate Theory/Design Course:** €750.00 (VAT zero rate). A maximum of 15 attendees will be included on any one course. Course dates: April 13<sup>th</sup> /April 20<sup>th</sup> /April 27<sup>th</sup>

**6-day Certificate Practical Application Course:** €1,350.00 (VAT zero rate). Includes the 3-day Theory/Design Course followed by a 3-day Practical Application Course. Course dates: April 13<sup>th</sup> /April 20<sup>th</sup> /April 27<sup>th</sup> (Theory/Design) followed by May 11<sup>th</sup> /May 18<sup>th</sup> /May 25<sup>th</sup> (Practical Applications).

There will be a maximum of 9 attendees on the Practical Application Course.

For further information please contact AECI office.

# The label that shows how much you care

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulation, S.I. No.299 of 2007 Part 3: Electricity Regulations 81 requires you to protect your workers and customers by having your electrical equipment inspected regularly.

Did you know that? No, you're not alone.

Should there be an incident on your premises? Then the H.S.A. will want to see your paperwork, and So will your insurers.

It doesn't have to be a problem.

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