

# Spark

the newsletter for bright sparks

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## ECA and ELECSA Hit the Road!



### Elex Coventry saw the unveiling of the new trailer that is the ECA and ELECSA Energy Efficiency & Renewables Roadshow!

The trailer has been created to showcase a range of renewable technologies to show contractors what's involved with these types of installations. In particular the trailer demonstrates:

- Smart home control solutions
- Commercial & domestic solar photovoltaic & inverter installations
- Solar thermal integration with high efficiency boiler and control system
- Ground source heat pump with low temperature heat distribution systems
- Air source heat pump with tank in tank storage with solar thermal and advanced web accessible controls
- Integration of multiple renewable technologies

The trailer is touring distributor networks across the country over the next few months. Emails will be sent to contractors to alert them when the trailer is going to be near them for those that want to pay a visit.

Following on from the roadshow, there will be open seminars taking place to provide contractors with more information about how they can get involved in this emerging market. The seminars will explain:

- How the sustainability agenda affects all contractors
- The market drivers for the renewables market, in particular how the Feed in Tariffs and Renewable Heat Incentive will bring you customers
- What product development is taking place to meet the demands of the market
- What skills are required and the best routes to gaining them
- What the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) is all about and what the assessment covers

Feedback so far from contractors that have seen the trailer is extremely positive. The ECA and ELECSA are seen as taking the initiative in this market by actively engaging with distributors, manufacturers and contractors.

If you want to register your interest for the ECA & ELECSA Energy Efficiency & Renewables Roadshow, please email [roadshow@eca.co.uk](mailto:roadshow@eca.co.uk).

## The Results are In...

The annual customer satisfaction survey provided an overall response rate of just under 2%. The positive messages that you gave us are that you are still praising the simplicity of dealing with us, our technical helpline and our friendly staff. More of you this

year are also seeing the benefit of us being part of the ECA group.

However there is also a very clear indication that this year shows a difficult picture for contractors. Many of you are finding it a challenge to stay busy and to keep your finances in order. This is feedback that also comes in via our customer services department and whenever we are out an about at various trade shows.

In response to the tough climate, we are making the following changes:

- For upcoming assessments, split payments are now available to help spread the cost of the assessment visit. This is different to the flexible direct debit system as a split payment can be made via any debit or credit card you choose to use over a two month period
- The cost of job notifications made via telephone are being cut from £5.00 + VAT per notification to £3.00 + VAT per notification. The online job notification is still just £1.50 + VAT per notification. The benefit of phoning your job notification in to the office saves you time as you can simply read the details of the job to a member of the office team who can process the job on your behalf

If you want to discuss either of these initiatives, just call us on **0845 634 9043**. If you are calling from a mobile we can call you straight back to save your minutes.

## Smile for the Camera

In response to feedback we have had from previous customer satisfaction surveys, in addition to the basic ID card already supplied, we can now also offer photo ID cards for those that want them.



To apply for a photo ID card, simply log into the ELECSA website and click on the 'Photo ID Cards' link on the left hand menu. You will then be guided through the process of ordering your card and uploading your photo. The photo ID cards are currently only available for the qualified supervisor and cost £6.00 inclusive of VAT & delivery.

If you have any queries about applying for the photo ID card, please contact us on **0845 634 9043**.

## Did You Know?

At ELECSA we are always trying to find ways to improve our service. You may not be aware that we recently extended the hours of our customer service team. You can call us on **0845 634 9043** and speak to a member of staff from 8.00am – 5.30pm Monday to Thursday and 8.00am – 5.00pm on Friday. Don't forget we are happy to return your call when dialling on a mobile.

# ELECSA and its influence on the Industry

We are often asked whether ELECSA lobbies on behalf of its contractors and how ELECSA represents your interests at industry level. The answer to this is that yes, we actively work with key industry bodies to ensure that improvements are made for the benefit of all.

We believe in high standards and in helping contractors by creating a level playing field for them. The way in which we work with industry is via the forums and networks that have been established for the industry to be managed:

- Electrotechnical Assessment Specification (EAS) – this committee is where we can influence assessment standards and ensure that there is consistency across the assessment bodies. The EAS is currently chaired by the ECA, which is an additional advantage to ELECSA contractors as we work closely with our parent organisation.
- Competent Persons Forum (CPF) – this forum is where we meet with government to discuss enforcement and compliance of the scheme. The CPF refers to the EAS committee for advice on assessment issues.
- JPEL64 – this is the national committee responsible for the Wiring Regulations and where we assist in setting the standards.

- Electrical Safety Council (ESC) – here we participate in an electrical installation industry forum to discuss common technical issues and problems with the aim of getting agreed responses for all bodies. We also take part in ESC organised speaking engagements alongside other industry parties, such as the IET, to keep contractors informed of changing standards.

For Microgeneration we are involved with MCS Technical Committees and also represent MCS Certification bodies on the steering committee for REAL Ltd, the Office for Fair Trading registered code of conduct that MCS approved contractors must be part of. This committee is there to work in partnership with REAL to protect consumers and ensure fair practise within the industry.

Our recognised expertise in the inspection of electrical installations are used by coroners, Police Forces, Trading Standards and Building Control departments across the country when expert opinion is required. This work reinforces our credentials as a credible and knowledgeable organisation and raises the profile of the organisation to which you belong.

## What's in a Name?

**On 1st October 2010, 'EC Certification Ltd', the legal entity that owns and operates the ELECSA brand, was renamed 'ECA Certification Ltd'.**

This change is to bring the business name in line with the ECA Group in order to provide more joined up approach to the services it offers. The company registration number and Directors remain unchanged and in practice the only change that you will see is the company name on the certificates and letterheads.

The only other change to make you aware of is that the change in legal entity has been reflected in the scheme document for Part P. The revised document is available on the website for you to access from the contractors area from the downloads section.

## ELECSA Extends its Scope

The Building Regulations were re-published on 1st October 2010 to take into account all of the changes since their publication in 2000. There are changes to Part L (energy efficiency) and Part F (ventilation) that are covered in more detail on pages 6 & 7 in this newsletter.

ECA Certification Limited as a certification body has extended its scope into heating and hot water systems using gas, oil, solid fuel and electric. This is so we can build a straightforward single job notification solution for contractors operating across multiple disciplines.

The latest Building Regulations has also brought about new categories for Roofing and cavity wall insulation which emphasises their role in the plans to reduce the overall carbon emissions produced by properties in the UK.

Finally, a new category for Microgeneration has also been included to align the Building Regulations with Article 14.4 of the Renewables Directive.

# Workshops Rolled Out for 2011

Following a successful trial of informal workshops across the country, we are now planning future workshops for 2011. Locations are shortly due to be confirmed for Leicestershire, Staffordshire, Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire. Contractors in these regions will be contacted by letter as soon as details are confirmed.

The workshops include areas of common misunderstanding or confusion relating to the Part P scheme, including Building Regulations, ring main testing, common assessment issues and completion of test certificates.

Presented by ELECSA assessors with first hand knowledge of the topics covered, the workshop days are informal technical sessions to brush up on your knowledge and to guide you through common pitfalls. You also get the opportunity to raise your own technical questions and get reliable expert advice directly from the assessor!

Feedback from contractors who have attended has been brilliant. They have found the day to be useful, informative and enjoyable – a refreshing approach to delivering technical information in a user friendly way.

The workshops are £69.00 plus vat and are inclusive of coffee and lunch breaks. If you want to register your interest for an upcoming workshop, either email [enquiries@elecsa.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@elecsa.co.uk) or call us on **0845 634 9043**.

## Other Upcoming Events

ELECSA always enjoys getting face to face with contractors and here are the key events where you can come and meet us.

### ELEX Toolfairs

The ECA & ELECSA Energy Efficiency and Renewables trailer will be present at each of these ELEX toolfairs:

30th November & 1st December

Sandown Park Racecourse, Surrey KT10 9AJ

10th & 11th March 2011

Yorkshire Event Centre, Harrogate HG2 8QZ

For more information go to [www.elexshow.info](http://www.elexshow.info)

### EcoBuild

1st – 3rd March 2011

ExCel, London Docklands E16 1XL

For more information go to [www.ecobuild.co.uk](http://www.ecobuild.co.uk)

## ELECSA Website Update

The new look ELECSA website has had a slight delay and is now looking to be launched in January. We will be keeping you up to date on progress via email.

There are many new features that have been developed and the technical infrastructure has been designed to take advantage of the latest web based marketing techniques. All of this should mean the new website will work harder at promoting you as a business as well as ELECSA.

Thank you to those contractors who contacted us to be willing volunteers to test the new website. We hope you'll like the new site when its launched and will welcome any feedback you have, please email your thoughts to [feedback@elecsa.co.uk](mailto:feedback@elecsa.co.uk).



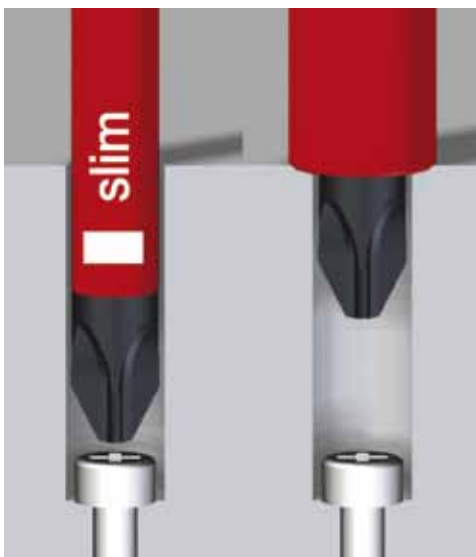
## New in the ELECSA Online Shop! ELECSA Gets Slim

ELECSA are pleased to announce that we have reached an exclusive agreement with WIHA for the supply of a range of high quality VDE approved tools and screwdrivers. For those of you who don't recognise the name, WIHA are the approved supplier of precision tool tips to many household name tool companies.



What we liked about the WIHA range of screwdrivers is that they recognised a common problem that many contractors have in using insulated screwdrivers – that they often don't fit when trying to reach a recessed screw in a consumer unit without trimming away the insulation.

By integrating the insulation within the screw head, recessed screws are no longer a problem and safety has not been compromised.



WIHA have also developed the world's first VDE approved Torque Screwdriver called Torque Vario. You may think that owning a torque screwdriver is a little excessive, however regulation BS7671:2008:134.1.1 states that proper materials should be used and that the manufacturer's instructions are followed.

Most quality breakers now have the correct torque settings required, written on the side of the breaker. **So how do you presently meet this regulation?** Owning a torque screwdriver could be your best form of defence if called upon to prove you have met this requirement.

Slim screwdriver sets are available in the ELECSA online shop at £29 + VAT.  
The VDE Torquevario Starter kit is available at £89 + VAT.

# Building Regulations Update



As mentioned on page 3 of Spark, the Building Regulations were recently amended with changes being made Parts L (energy efficiency) and F (ventilation). These changes come into effect 1st October 2010 and contractors should download the latest documents from [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk) in order to ensure they are familiar with the requirements.

## Approved Documents L1A & L1B – Conservation of Fuel & Power

The key requirements of Part L as they apply to dwellings are to:

- Limit heat gains and losses
- Provide fixed building services which are energy efficient and have effective controls
- Commission and test the building services to ensure fuel efficiency
- Provide sufficient information to the owner of the building to allow efficient operation of the building and its services

Requirements for Part L with regards to non-dwellings are set out in Approved Documents L2A and L2B. Although the requirements of the new Approved Documents are far-reaching for many parties, for contractors working in dwellings it involves primarily the selection and installation of lighting and electric heating and/or electric heating controls.

The new Approved Documents rely heavily on the prescriptive guidance set out in the second tier document, **Domestic Services Compliance Guide – 2010 Edition**. As with the Approved Documents, this Guide is also published by HM Government and can be downloaded free of charge from the Planning Portal website.

In particular, the following sections of the Domestic Services Compliance Guide should be noted by ELECSA contractors:

### Electric Heating (other than wet systems)

- Standalone electric heating such as panel heaters must be provided with time controls and thermostats. These may be either integral within the appliance or separately wired.
- Storage heaters are required to have input and output controls.
- The areas being heated should be split into defined zones, and guidance is given on zone size.

### Electric Underfloor Heating

- Very specific guidance is given regarding sizes of heating zones, the need for thermal insulation on ground floors, the need to

minimise the length of interconnections, screed thickness if used for off peak applications and of course controls.

## Lighting

This builds on the guidance given in the 2006 Approved Documents, by specifying a need for increased use of energy efficient lighting, but also recognises the European phase-out of tungsten filament GLS style lamps over the next few years.

The most pertinent points relating to internal lighting are:

- Minimum number of low energy lighting points is now 3 out of 4 (75%), whereas it was previously 1 out of 4 (25%)
- Restriction on 'dedicated lampholders only' has been lifted
- Definition of low energy lamp is now 'greater than 45 lamp lumens per watt' where as previously it was 'greater than 40 lumens per watt'

In practice this means that as long as at least 75% of the total fittings are normal bayonet cap or Edison screw lampholders and fitted with good quality plug in self ballasted compact fluorescent lamps, a compliant solution can be obtained. Dedicated low energy fittings can of course also be used.

In terms of external lighting, the requirements can be summarised as either:

- Non low energy lamps (ie. less than 45 lumens per watt) may be used, as long as the lamp(s) is not greater than 100W, and the lamp is only controlled automatically by occupancy sensing or daylight sensing; OR
- Low energy lamps (ie. greater than 45 lumens per watt) may be used, and controlled either by automatic daylight sensing control, or manual switching.

As with previous requirements the 'prohibited' external lighting combination is therefore a non-low energy lamp that is capable of being left switched on indefinitely – i.e. by manual switching or override switches.

It should be remembered that if any lamp gives off its light by a glowing filament, it will not be operating at greater than 45 lumens

per watt and **therefore it is not considered to be efficient as far as the Building Regulations are concerned** despite any description of the product to the contrary by the manufacturer!

### Approved Document F – Means of Ventilation

The key requirement of Part F is to provide adequate means of ventilation for people in the building. The Approved Document applies to both dwellings and non-dwellings however in this summary, we will only look at the areas most likely to affect ELECSA contractors which is the installation of stand alone extraction fans and/or the associated supply and control wiring.

There is a new second tier document that gives additional practical guidance on the installation and testing of ventilation systems, Domestic Ventilation Compliance Guide – 2010 Edition. Contractors can access this document free of charge from [www.planningportal.gov](http://www.planningportal.gov).

#### New Dwellings

*Table 5.1a - Gives required extract rates for intermittent fans (such as wall, ceiling, window fans or cooker hoods) as follows:*

- Kitchen (fan or hood near cooker) 30 litres per second
- Kitchen (fan not near cooker) 60 litres per second
- Utility Room 30 litres per second
- Bathroom 15 litres per second
- Sanitary Accommodation 6 litres per second

*Table 5.2a - Also stipulates some further practical guidance:*

- Intermittent extract fans are required in wet rooms
- Cooker hoods to be 650-750mm above hob surface (or otherwise in line with manufacturers' instructions)
- Intermittent fans (apart from cooker hoods) should be installed as high as practicable and preferably less than 400mm from the ceiling
- Where fans and background ventilators are located in the same room, they should be installed at least 500mm apart
- Controls can be manual or automatic by a sensor (such as humidity/occupancy/etc) but humidity control alone should not be used for sanitary accommodation as odour is the main pollutant

- In a room with no openable window (eg. a room within a room) an intermittent fan should have a 15 minute overrun. In rooms with no natural light the fan(s) could be controlled by the operation of the main light switch
- Fans should be quite in operation so as not to discourage their usage by occupants

#### Existing Dwellings

*Paragraph 7.1*

This requires that in an existing building, the areas affected by any 'change of use' (for example: an extension that adds rooms, the conversion of a room to a kitchen, etc) must have ventilation provided that meets the requirements of Approved Document F. In the rest of the building, or areas not affected by a change of use, the requirement is to make the ventilation 'no less satisfactory than before the work was carried out'.

*Paragraph 7.21*

If working in an existing bathroom or kitchen in a building, compliance with the regulations should not be made any worse than before the work was carried out.

*Table D1*

Ventilation intake and extracts need to be placed away from sources of pollution; such as:

- Parking areas
- Adjacent building exhausts
- Stack discharges
- Away from the prevailing wind
- Areas where pollutants may build up, such as behind architectural screens, etc.

In all cases regarding Building Regulations compliance, it should be remembered that the Approved Documents and associated second tier documents are guidance, on how regulations might be complied with.

Other methods of compliance can be sought and it is recommended that where any doubt exists, to seek advice on individual projects from the local authority Building Control department.

# Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) Survives Spending Review

**It was good news for the renewable technology industry when the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) survived the October spending review.**

The RHI will go ahead in 2011 with the support of over £850m investment. Although we do not yet know how this money will be targeted and distributed, we do know that technologies such as domestic solar thermal and heat pump technologies will be included in the details of any scheme.

Supporting renewable heat through the RHI is expected to have a similar impact on the market as the Feed in Tariffs (FITs) have had on the solar photovoltaic market. As heat generation is responsible for around half (49%) of the final energy demand consumed in the UK and roughly half of all UK's carbon emissions, the RHI will have a significant impact in assisting the UK to meet its carbon reduction targets.

With increasing energy and gas prices for consumers, the interest in microgeneration is growing. There is a new leaflet provided by Ofgem explaining the Feed in Tariff scheme to consumers and has been added as a download available from the ELECSA website on the microgeneration page.

To help your customers gain the financial incentives being provided for microgeneration technologies, you will need to be thinking about how to progress to being Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) registered. If you need any advice on how to do this, please phone us on **0845 634 9043**.



*Image supplied courtesy of Norfolk Solar Ltd*

## Top Tip! Reminder on Purchasing Inverters

**We sent an email to all MCS registered installers in September to alert them to a potential problem in sourcing Photovoltaic inverters. We had been made aware that a number of Photovoltaic inverters were being sold into the UK market **WITHOUT** G83 certification.**

These inverters are originating from both established and new entrants into the inverter manufacturing market but are designed for non UK markets and therefore do not hold the required G83 certification.

All contractors should check the certification of inverters carefully as compliance with G83 is an important safety requirement and an essential part of your MCS accreditation.