

Spark

the newsletter for bright sparks

elecsa newsletter issue 09 spring 11

Prepare now for 17th Edition Amendment of Wiring Regulations

Did you know that the Wiring Regulations are being amended? The 1st amendment of the 17th Edition of the Wiring Regulations will bring our national standard (BS7671) into line with other European standards.

The amended regulations are scheduled for publication on 1st July 2011. From 30th June – 31st December 2011, when designing installations, you will have the choice to work to the existing standards or the new Amendment 1; but not both – you cannot pick and choose which bits to follow! All installations designed after 31st December 2011 will need to comply with BS7671 17th Edition Amendment 1.

The good news is that most installers working in domestic properties will not be affected to any great extent. Those who do Periodic Inspections (PIR's) will have to adopt new paperwork along with new coding. There will be no requirement to undertake a new course and your existing 17th edition qualification is still current. For those that haven't yet got their 17th edition qualification, there is an online course available through the ECA with discounted rates for ELECSA contractors.



Anyone who signs up for the course will receive the updates automatically free of charge.

For more information see page 11 or go to the ELECSA online shop or www.eca.co.uk/online17th.

It does mean that you will have to purchase a new copy of the Wiring Regulations. Here we can help, **all ELECSA registered contractors (and ECA members) can place their orders now for BS7671:2008 Amendment 1 for just £60.** This includes delivery and for all orders received before the 31st July 2011, contractors will also receive a **FREE** 3.5mm VDE Slimfix screwdriver (worth £8.27) from Wiha. By placing your order now, you'll be amongst the first to have the new regs book, simply call us on **0845 634 9043.**

To explain the changes in the regulations and how they affect you, we have launched a nationwide series of free seminars. Knowledge is power and coming along to our seminars will mean that you get the →

Prepare now for 17th Edition Amendment of Wiring Regulations

facts along with practical guidance from the experts. The sessions are interactive, where you can get straightforward answers to your own questions.

The seminars are happening around the country on the following dates:

Tuesday 10th May	Leeds	Thursday 9th June	Newbury
Wednesday 11th May	Stockport	Monday 13th June	Harlow
Thursday 12th May	Preston	Tuesday 14th June	Basildon
Tuesday 17th May	Stafford	Wednesday 15th June	Canterbury
Wednesday 18th May	Sheffield	Monday 20th June	Woking
Thursday 19th May	Chesterfield	Tuesday 21st June	Eastleigh
Tuesday 24th May	Bury St Edmunds	Thursday 23rd June	Milton Keynes
Wednesday 25th May	Kings Lynn	Monday 4th July	Penrith
Thursday 26th May	Peterborough	Tuesday 5th July	Newcastle
Tuesday 31st May	Torquay	Wednesday 6th July	Darlington
Wednesday 1st June	Taunton	Thursday 7th July	Coventry
Thursday 2nd June	Bath	Tuesday 12th July	Kidderminster
Monday 6th June	Cheltenham	Wednesday 13th July	Hull
Tuesday 7th June	Cardiff		

To find out more or to book your place, contact **Donna Gladwin on 0845 634 9043 or e-mail donna.gladwin@eca.co.uk**.

NOW AVAILABLE Tradesman Insurance

The ECIC has launched a highly-competitive, specialist Public Liability, Contractors' All Risks and Personal Accident Tradesmen's policy for ELECSA approved contractors.

Key features include:

- Core Public Liability insurance cover
- Optional Employers' Liability, Contractors' All Risks, Tools and Personal Accident insurance
- Free 24-hour helpline to provide legal advice on any business related issue.

To be eligible, you must be a self-employed tradesman, sole trader or limited company undertaking domestic and/or light commercial activity, with up to seven manual employees and annual turnover of up to £500k.

To get a competitive quote today, visit **www.elecsa.co.uk** and log in with your ELECSA details.



WORKSHOPS - SUMMER 2011

Continuing on the strength of the recent Part P workshops in Leicester, Stafford and Oxford we have new dates for Summer 2011:

Chesterfield	19 May 2011
Newcastle	8 June 2011
Chichester	22 June 2011
Chester	7 July 2011
Northampton	14 July 2011

The informal workshops are aimed at addressing common misunderstandings or confusion around the Part P Scheme and include presentations on: common assessment issues, Building Regulations, ring circuit testing, notifiable works, safe isolation and completion of certificates.

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

The workshops cost **£69.00 plus VAT** and are inclusive of refreshments and lunch. To register for a workshop, please email: enquiries@elecsa.co.uk or call Jean Mickle on 0845 634 9043.

Rome Wasn't Built in a Day

One ELECSEA contractor recently learned the hard way that 'Rome wasn't built in a day', when he appeared on the Channel 4 show of the same name. Jim Blackham, of Staffordshire based EAB Contractors, took on the role of site foreman for the hit show, leading a team of five other builders to construct a fully functioning Roman villa in Wroxeter, Shropshire.



Jim (centre) with his team

Image courtesy of Channel 4

Building the villa was a far cry from Jim's usual day job, where he specialises in modern renovations and new builds, including Part P electrical work, for which he is registered with ELECSEA. As site foreman, Jim found himself learning 2,000-year-old building techniques, using only ancient materials, and managing a team of builders he'd never worked with before.

The project was a huge challenge for Jim and the team. Not only did they have to learn ancient techniques but they could also only use the materials and tools that would have been used by the Romans. So that meant no power tools and no wheelbarrows!

"I've been a builder for more than 25 years, but this was a massive learning curve," said Jim, whose only previous knowledge of the Romans was what he'd learnt at school. "Thankfully, experts showed us how to do everything, from making our own mortar to creating windows out of sheep's entrails."

But because this was a Roman villa built in the 21st century, modern health and safety criteria still had to be met. "The public would be

visiting the villa after it was finished, so we had to make sure it was safe for them," explained Jim. "Building Control were watching over us!"

As with any project, Jim says there were highs and lows. "Making the beautiful oak frame from scratch was very tricky but managing to raise it into place gave us the most amazing feeling." Conversely, having to put render all over the building was extremely mundane. "There was such a lot of it and it was monotonous, physical hard work. We thought we'd never get to the end of it."

So was it all worth it? "Definitely. What we learned was invaluable. It was a once in a lifetime experience and we had such good fun. And even the Roman food we had at the completion feast was very tasty! I'd definitely do it again."

The series has now finished, but to read more about it and see clips from the shows, visit: <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/rome-wasnt-built-in-a-day>.

Protecting your contact information

We have been contacted by a few members who are concerned that their contact details are getting into the wrong hands by being publicly available.

Please note that, apart from strict agreements in place with Yellow Pages and Thomson Directories, we do not give out or sell your details to third parties. However, we are under obligation to publish our members' business contact details on our website and on the Competent Persons website owned by LABC as part of the requirements of Part P, so occasional calls from third parties are inevitable.

You can alter how your details appear on the website by logging onto My ELECSEA and editing your contact info in the Search Contact Details section. Just remember that this will also affect how potential customers may contact you as well.

To protect yourselves from potential fraudulent activity, be vigilant and don't give out personal or bank details unless the call has been solicited by you. If in doubt, take a contact number and call the person back.

ECA Makes MCS Easy

Becoming accredited to the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) in order to install renewable technologies is not as difficult as you may think. In fact, most companies are already doing 95 per cent of what's required. And to help you understand the requirements, the ECA has launched the MCS Made Easy one day course.



In this rapidly growing industry, installers and products that are certified under the MCS are likely to be seen as the preferred option in the market place, putting you in a better position to gain more business. MCS certification not only assures your professional reputation as an installer of renewable technologies, it also enables you and your customers to benefit from government financial incentives, such as Feed-In Tariffs (FITs) and the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).

The MCS Made Easy one day course is based on the requirements detailed in the UK Microgeneration Installation Standard, MCS001. The course is centred around a simplified, comprehensive MCS manual, which is designed to take you through the MCS registration process quickly and efficiently, in preparation for a successful assessment.

During the course, the requirements of UK Microgeneration Installation Standard MCS001 will be explained to you by an industry expert. You will also be shown how to use the MCS paperwork and learn what the MCS assessor will look for. Attending the course will ultimately save your company time and effort in preparing for the assessments. Although it cannot guarantee you will pass your MCS assessment, it will help you to be significantly better prepared and help minimise the number of non-conformances your company is likely

Book on a course

MCS Made Easy can be booked online at www.eca.co.uk/training, by calling 0845 872 5361 or emailing eandtcourses@eca.co.uk for a booking form.

Date and venue details:

18th May 2011
Loughborough

1st June 2011
Bury St Edmunds

7th June 2011
Warrington

6th July 2011
Bournemouth

Course fees:

£145 + VAT (£174) per delegate
ECA Member Rate

£175 + VAT (£210) per delegate
ELECSA Member Rate

£210 + VAT (£252) per delegate
Non Member Rate

A subsidised rate of £43.50 (inc. VAT) is available for Welsh delegates, thanks to Welsh Assembly Government funding. Call us 0845 872 5361 for more information.

The delegate rate includes the MCS Made Easy manual, ECA course materials lunch and refreshments.

to receive. It will also equip you with effective processes and a quality management system, eliminating the need for you to spend valuable time and resource setting up your own system.

The course is aimed at those responsible for survey, design, installation, specification, commissioning, handover and maintenance of microgeneration systems, nominated representatives and qualified supervisors, or those responsible for demonstrating compliance with the requirements of MCS001.

Included in the course materials are a series of installations booklets, developed by the ECA, to simplify the process further. Ongoing support is provided via the MCS Made Easy support website, www.eca.co.uk/mcs, which contains additional information and documents to support the course and to help you prepare for your assessment.

For more information:

Comprehensive information about how to apply for MCS assessment can be found on the ELECSA website at www.elecsa.co.uk/microgeneration and more information on the scheme and its requirements can be found at: www.microgenerationcertification.org.uk.

MCS Made Easy can be booked online at www.eca.co.uk/training, by calling **0845 872 5361** or emailing eandtcourses@eca.co.uk for a booking form.

Roadshow Success

We told you about the Renewables Roadshow in the last issue. The Roadshow has now come to an end, so here's a recap of it, in case you missed it.



Beginning in Stoke-on-Trent early one morning late last October, the Renewables Roadshow has visited a total of 52 locations across the country over the last few months. Kitted out with a range of renewable technologies, the specially-converted roadshow trailer opened its doors to some 1,400 visitors during the tour, until it came to a halt on a bright, spring day in Hull at the end of March.

On entering the trailer, visitors were treated to demonstrations of gadgets and equipment, including: smart home controls, solar PV and inverter installations, solar thermal integration, a ground source heat pump and an air source heat pump.

ECA and ELECSA renewables experts were on hand to offer practical advice and

answer questions. They talked about energy management building control, how multiple renewable technologies can be integrated and what contractors need to do to become Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) accredited.

As well as the trailer, nine seminars also took place around the country, looking at the bigger picture of the renewables market and offering contractors specific, practical advice on how to get trained and assessed for MCS. Each seminar included a series of presentations on the market drivers for renewables, product development, what skills are required for renewables installations and what MCS is all about.

Most valuably, at each seminar attendees had the chance to hear from a local contractor already delivering renewable technologies. The contractor talked everyone through how they'd got started, what training they'd needed and how they found the MCS assessment.

The Renewables Roadshow has now finished but watch out for details of some follow up activity scheduled for later in the autumn.

For more information on how you can get involved in renewables and to get assessed for MCS, visit www.elecsa.co.uk/microgeneration.



Ecobuild

As part of the Renewables Roadshow, ECA and ELECSA had a stand at Ecobuild (1-3 March at Excel London). Attracting some 1,300 exhibitors and more than 50,000 visitors over the three days, this was the biggest Ecobuild yet.

ECA Group CEO, Steve Bratt, said of Ecobuild: "Given the work ECA and ELECSA are already doing to promote renewable technologies to contractors, it was vital for us to be at this premier event for the renewables sector. It was an incredible show, with some amazing products and services on display, attracting thousands of visitors. Our stand was busy everyday and our experts were able to share their knowledge on MCS with a wide audience."



See FAQs on page 8 for some of the issues raised by visitors to the stand.

Cooling off periods are not just for summer

You may be aware that consumer protection law now covers doorstep selling. But did you know that it also applies to you, the electrical contractor? It's not just door-to-door salesmen who are required to offer cooling off periods when selling to customers in their homes. The regulations apply to anyone contracting with consumers at their home or place of work. And if you don't comply, you might not get paid if the customer changes their mind. To stop that happening, here's what you need to know:



1 What are the regulations?

The full title of the legislation is the 'Cancellation of Contracts Made in a Consumer's Home or Place of Work etc. Regulations 2008' (the Regulations). You may see them referred to as the 'Doorstep Selling and Cold Calling Regulations' but this is a misnomer. The Regulations aim to protect anyone who may have entered into an agreement as a result of undue pressure, by allowing them a cooling off period of 7 calendar days, during which time they have the right to cancel their contract.

2 Who do they cover?

The Regulations apply to all contracts of £35 or more made with consumers, irrespective of whether the contract was made at their home or place of work, the home of another person, or anywhere away from the trader's usual business premises (such as at a trade show).

3 But the customer called me...

It doesn't matter. The Regulations cover both unsolicited work (where you happened to call in on them) and solicited work (where they contacted you). This is how the Regulations differ from previous consumer protection legislation.

4 What do I need to do?

You must provide your customer with a written notice explaining their right to cancel within the 7-day cooling off period. This can be included as part of your written

contract, in a separate box headed 'Right to Cancel'. If your contract for the work is not in writing, we strongly advise you to give the customer a written Right to Cancel notice nonetheless. You should also give them a copy of the cancellation notice. Example Right to Cancel and Cancellation Notice forms can be found on the contractors area of the ELECSA website.

5 They want me to start work before the end of the cooling off period. Can I do this?

You can start work before the 7 days are up, but the customer should notify you in writing that they are happy to waive their right to cancel. You can offer them a waiver form with the Right to Cancel notice, as a means of formalising their agreement for you to start early.

6 What will happen if I don't offer them a cooling off period?

You are required by law to offer the cooling off period. If you do not, the contract you make with your customer will become unenforceable and they could refuse to pay you.

More information on the Cancellation of Contracts Regulations can be found at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2008/1816/contents/made>

Energy incentives debate is hotting up

With the UK committed to its target of sourcing 15 per cent of energy from renewable resources by 2020, it's no wonder the government is seeking to incentivise installation of renewable technologies. Long-awaited details of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) were released in March. But at the same time, a review of Feed in Tariffs (FITs) was also announced.

Latest statistics from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) show that more than 21,000 applications have been registered under the FITs scheme, since it launched in April 2010. This, together with the recent unveiling of the £860m Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), is great news for the renewables industry. Not only should the incentives persuade more people to invest in the technology, but they should also help contractors expand their business offerings. And with FITs having already created tens of thousands of jobs, and the RHI likely to create many more, the UK is well on its way to reducing its reliance on fossil fuels.

ELECSA sees the RHI as an important evolution in the debate which has energised the industry in recent years. According to the Government's own press statement the RHI is good news for our contractors, as it provides £4.5 billion stimulus for a new market in renewable heat and supports the existing 150,000 jobs in the heating industry. It also aims to reduce emissions by 44 million tonnes – the equivalent of carbon emitted by 20 new gas power stations – between October 2011 and 2020.

However, while the RHI will support businesses, contractors need to make sure they are getting the right information about the technology and training to make this happen in their own organisations. Throughout our recent renewables roadshow (see page 5), we've spoken to many contractors who feel confused by all the information, some of it incorrect, with which they've been bombarded. Contractors need to embrace the new technology but they need to get the right

advice and talk to independent certification bodies such as ELECSA to ensure they are making all the right decisions.

And while it's great that there have been so many FITs installations, it seems that the scheme itself has been generating the 'wrong kind of interest', provoking a government review. There has been lots of interest from so called 'energy farms' or businesses harvesting the FIT subsidy with massive PV developments that could take away the incentive from householders and small businesses.

But we should not fear the review. Not only will it clarify who is entitled to benefit from FITs, it will also provide a further opportunity for smaller contractors to re-market their renewables offering.

The review will focus upon curbing the larger applications, most of which would fall outside the remit of our members' needs. The maximum FIT is paid out for systems under 4kWp (kilowatt peak) when retrofitted, although this is slightly less for new developments. The majority of systems installed are 2-2.5 kWp (around 12 PV panels). A single development of 20 houses with this level of PV would still fall outside the scope of the review.

The review will stimulate rather than stymie growth and ensure the right kind of interest guarantees the renewables industry remains FIT for purpose.



ELECSA experts answer your renewables and MCS questions

Q What is the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) Assessment? Is it like Part P?

A Kind of. The MCS scheme was established by the Department for Energy and Climate Change to help reach UK targets to both reduce our carbon emissions and increase our use of renewable technologies.

It is like Part P in that it is an annual assessment of your competence in installing particular renewable technologies (such as solar PV). Where it differs from Part P is that there is more emphasis on what you tell the customer. So a key part of the assessment looks at how you deal with your customer enquiry, the site survey, how you designed your installation, the calculations you made in determining the expected performance of the system and the handover to the customer.

Q How long does the assessment take?

A For up to two technologies we can do this in a day, assuming that both technologies are installed at the same site. For each additional technology, an extra half day assessment will be required. You will be notified of an assessment date within about 4-6 weeks of your application.

Q What are the requirements for the site work? How do I get my first site for inspection?

A Ideally the site should be no more than 20 minutes from your place of work. Any longer and it eats into the overall assessment time – which may mean we have to come back!

Getting your first site can be tricky. Your customer will be eligible for funding/tariffs from the commissioning date of the installed system. Your first installation can be used for your site assessment and still be eligible for funding/tariffs by recommissioning the system once you've successfully passed your assessment. For the benefit of your customer, you may want to consider keeping your assessment date as near to your project completion date as possible.

Q Can I combine it with my Part P assessment?

A If you are an existing ELECSA contractor, we will be able to combine your Part P surveillance with an MCS assessment in the same day.

For contractors looking to join ELECSA for both Part P and MCS, we can do this in a day but your Part P will be restricted to electrical work undertaken in connection with the installation of the renewable technology. If you want to have full scope Part P, this is likely to be an additional half day assessment on top of your MCS.

Our approach to assessment is to minimise cost and disruption to you and your business wherever possible. Please talk to us about your assessment needs and we will work with you to keep the assessment time and cost to a minimum.

Q Do any subcontractors I use also have to be MCS accredited?

A Other subcontractors that you use do not also have to be MCS accredited but you will have to demonstrate to the assessor that you have adequate processes in place to determine the competence of the people you use on site.

Q How often do I need to be inspected?

A A surveillance visit takes place every 12 months to maintain your registration.

Q Apart from the costs for assessment, are there any other costs I need to be aware of to be MCS accredited?

A There is a license fee payable to Gemserv (the organisation responsible for managing MCS who we are licensed by). This is an annual fee of £110 + VAT which we will collect on their behalf on successful completion of an assessment. They also charge £15 job notification fee for each installation.

There is also a scheme requirement to be a member of an OFT registered code of conduct. To date there is just one, REAL Assurance (www.realassurance.org.uk). Their quoted prices start at £220 + VAT.

Q I'm already a registered contractor, why do I need MCS accreditation?

A Apart from the fact that you would be gaining a recognised badge of credibility for the work you undertake, more importantly, your customers will not be able to gain access to the available financial incentives unless they use an MCS registered contractor and MCS approved products.

This is a requirement to receiving funding under both Feed in Tariffs (FiTs) and the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).

Q How does the Feed in Tariff work?

A As of 1st April 2011, the Feed in Tariff pays householders 43.3p for every unit of energy that they generate. For energy that is unused and sent back to the grid, there is an additional 3.1p per unit paid. The payment is made from the energy companies and is guaranteed for 25 years, is indexed linked to inflation and is tax free!

To measure the electricity generated, a kilowatt hour generation meter is installed between the supply and the PV system.

Q It's under review at the minute, isn't it? What's to stop the Feed in Tariff being axed?

A The Feed in Tariff is under review and the payments are likely to reduce in the future for new installations. However, people who are already signed up to FiTs are guaranteed to continue to receive their payments. The scheme is currently underwritten by statute so would require new legislation to revoke it completely.

The current review is more about ensuring that the scheme benefits the smaller installations it was designed for (householders and small businesses) rather than the

Q large industrial applications. Recent comments from the Government have underlined their commitment to FiTs as a way of reaching their EU targets.

A I'm interested in getting involved in this sort of work but I'm a bit nervous about the roof work. How do I approach this?

Why not find a reputable roofer in your area to work in partnership with? The National Roofing Federation has trained its members in the basics of installing PV and thermal systems. They'll turn up on site with the scaffolding and leave with the wires or pipes poking through the roof ready for you to connect up.

Q

A What support does the ECA and ELECSA provide to contractors looking to get involved in renewable technologies?

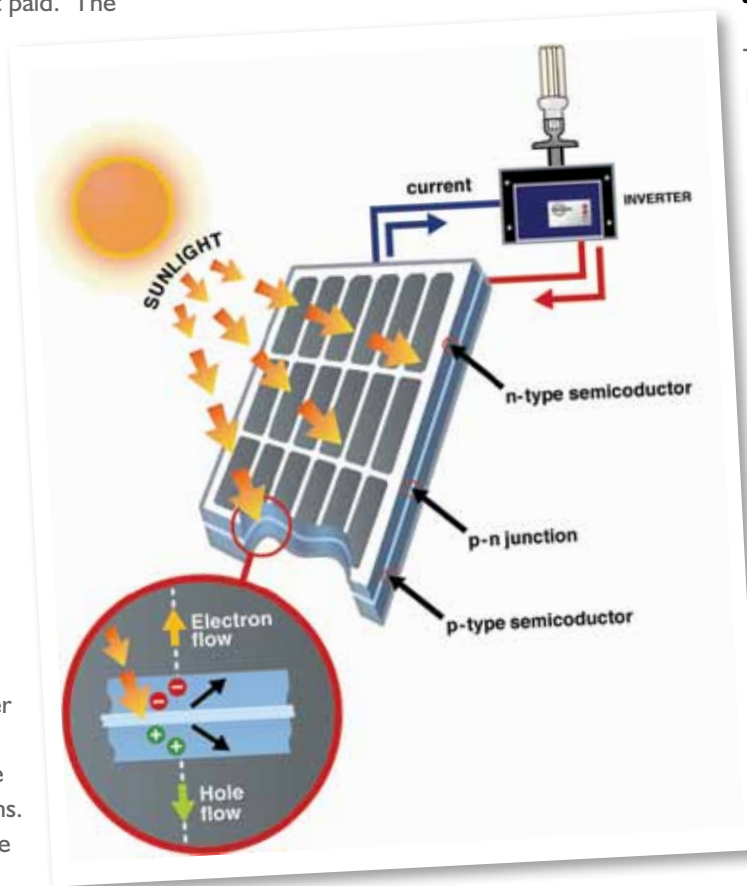
The ECA provides a range of nationally accredited training courses all designed to provide valuable information for both technical and non-technical people requiring more information about the renewable markets. For the full range of courses available please go to www.eca.co.uk/courses

The MCS Made Easy programme is available to those needing additional help in preparing for their assessment. For more information, see the article on page 4.

We have been putting on numerous presentations at seminars, roadshows and exhibitions to help demystify the opportunities presented by the renewable

technology sector and show contractors how they can get involved.

And of course we can also provide a robust but friendly MCS assessment service through ELECSA. For more information go to www.elecsa.co.uk/microgeneration.



Splash around safely!

Requirements for electrical installations in swimming pools and other water basins

With the recent warm and sunny weather we've been enjoying, many people may be thinking of cooling off with a dip in the pool. Or perhaps, they may be thinking ahead to lazy summer evenings relaxing in their gardens, being mesmerised by an illuminated water feature. Whether your customers are planning to add swimming pools, fountains or other water based features in their homes or gardens, the Wiring Regulations have specific requirements for electrical work associated with this type of installation.



Because of the increased risk of electric shock around water, swimming pools and other basins are classed as special locations and are covered by Section 702 of BS7671 2008. Here's a reminder of the key points.

Swimming Pools

Supplementary equipotential bonding is required for all extraneous conductive parts and the protective conductors of all exposed conductive parts in zones 0, 1 and 2 (Regulation 702.415.2). There is no requirement to install a metal grid but where one is installed it must be connected to the local supplementary equipotential bonding.

Equipment including luminaires for swimming pools (Regulations 702.410.3.4.1 and 702.410.3.4.3)

In zone 0 and 1, only protection by separated extra-low voltage (SELV) is permitted, with the source being installed outside of zone 0, 1 and 2.

Zone 0 should have a nominal voltage not exceeding 12V a.c. and zone 1 should have a nominal voltage not exceeding 25V a.c.

In zone 2, luminaires are required to be protected by SELV, 30mA RCD protection or electrical separation.

For swimming pools with no zone 2 see Regulation 702.55.4.

Socket outlets (Regulation 702.53)

Sockets must not be installed in zones 0 or 1, unless it is not possible to install outside of zone 1. If this is the case, the sockets may be fitted in zone 1 and the following must be observed:

- The sockets must be a minimum of 1.25m from the border of zone 0 and a minimum of 0.3m above the floor
- The supply to the socket must have either:
 - SELV
 - 30mA protected
 - Use electrical separation

Sockets may be installed in zone 2, providing the following are observed:

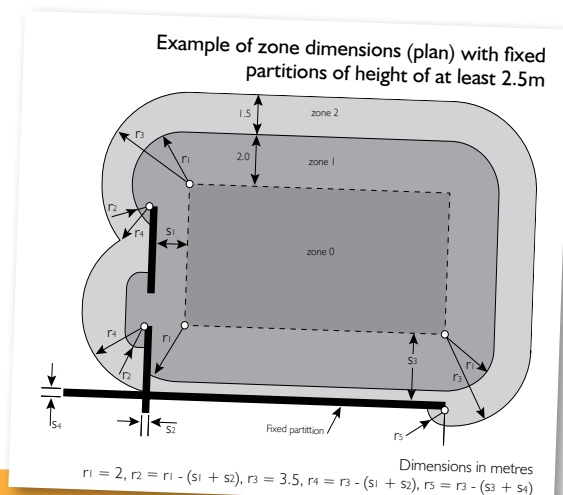
- SELV
- 30mA protected
- Use electrical separation

If you are using SELV or electrical separation, the source can be in zone 2, providing the supply circuit is 30mA protected.

Current-using equipment

In zones 0 and 1 it is only permitted to install current-using equipment specifically designed for use in those areas (Regulations 702.55.2 and 702.55.4).

Further guidance can be found in Section 702 of BS7671 or in Guidance Note 7.



ECA online 17th edition training

Save time and money!

ECA's training experts have launched a new, online learning solution for the 17th Edition of the Wiring Regulations (BS7671:2008). Working together with online learning specialists, the Learning Lounge, this course is ideal for contractors looking for an alternative way to learn.

- Interactive content to make learning easier and more enjoyable
- Learn at your own pace
- Practical exercises designed to check your understanding and mark your progress
- Examples based on real life situations
- Presented by ECA's own knowledgeable and experienced technical assessment team

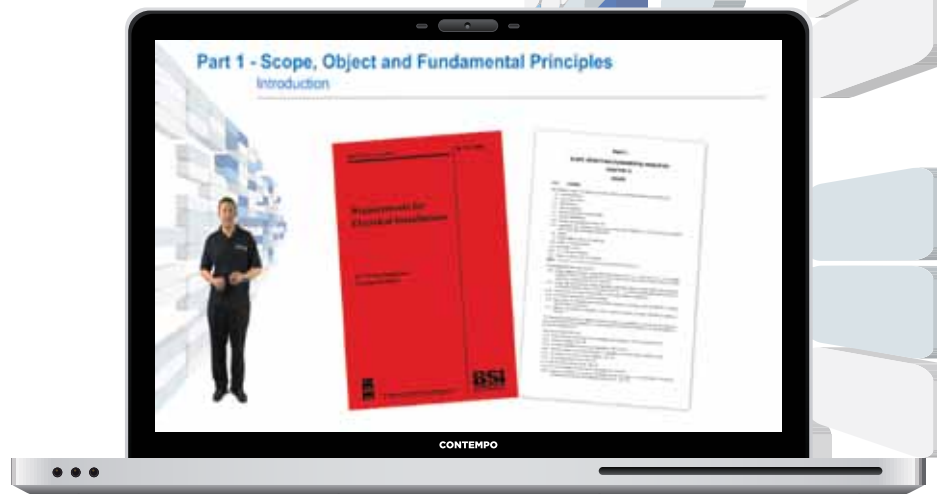
The course can be taken alone or with assessment at one of the ECA's nationwide venues as part of a discounted package. If you take the course only, you will need to find a local assessment centre for you to take your final exam.

To undertake the course alone is just **£280 + VAT**, with the assessment it is **£340 + VAT**.

Further discounts apply to those who are both ECA members and ELECSA contractors – check the website for details.

Watch a demonstration video and find out more at:

www.eca.co.uk/online17th



Government to make it easier for small businesses to win contracts

The Prime Minister has launched a new online tool to allow businesses to search for opportunities to supply goods and services to central government. The Contracts Finder is part of a series of government measures aimed at making it easier for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to find and apply for public sector contracts.

The new tool is aimed at reducing the time and bureaucracy involved in competing for a contract and it is another step towards making the Government's procurement process totally transparent. All public sector contracting opportunities worth over £10,000 are included and businesses can sign up to be alerted by email when new opportunities arise in their area of work.

The Government's ambition is to ensure that at least 25 per cent of government contracts go to SMEs. As well as

launching the Contracts Finder, the Government is seeking to eliminate the pre-qualification process for contracts under £100,000.

To search for opportunities and sign up for email alerts, visit the Contracts Finder here:

www.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk

New legislation for cable joint resins

Since 1st December 2010, cable resins containing the substance MDI have been re-classified as Carcinogen Category 3, suspected of causing cancer, and all carry new labelling to this effect. This applies to the vast majority of cable jointing resins on the market, except for Prysmian's JEM resin solutions which are 100% MDI free and present none of the health and safety risks associated with other resins containing hazardous chemicals.

Prysmian developed JEM (Joint Encapsulation Material) technology more than ten years ago in response to customer requests. JEM resin is free from harmful isocyanate, causes no

irritation or sensitising and independent testing determined that the material requires no hazardous labelling.



Jonathan Rawlinson, Technical Manager at Prysmian Cables and Systems commented: "The first time many people become aware of the change in legislation and labelling could be when they come to joint cables together onsite. This would be an unwelcome surprise, especially if they do not understand the reasons why this change has happened or the risks to their health."

He added: "It would be prudent for everyone in the cable joint resin supply chain to use products that present no health and safety risk to users.

Prysmian's JEM resin solutions are ideally placed to fulfil this need, also offering technical and environmental benefits, ten years service history and zero electrical failures."

For more information visit

www.prysmian.co.uk/energy/Components/Joints