

THIS ISSUE

Update on Periodics **P.2**Changes to MCS
Standards **P.5**17th Edition
Amendment 1 **P.8**Renewables Incentives
Latest **P.12**

INTRODUCING A WHOLE NEW LOOK!

You'll have noticed something different about this issue of SPARK! To mark the 10th issue, we thought it was time for a change and we hope you like the new look.

Over the last few years, ELECSA has grown into a leading scheme provider. We now have over 7500 registered contractors with our Part P and MCS schemes and we have ambitions plans to grow further. So we think it's high time for our image to evolve, to reflect a maturing organisation and take our brand from strength to strength.

The SPARK newsletter and our website are the first areas to change, which will be followed by a new campaign being launched in the new year. Watch this space for more information on the campaign!

The new website will be live by 30th November 2011 and has been designed to better engage and educate a wider audience about what we do. For contractors, there will be more technical information and our services will be easier to access online.

The aim of SPARK is to keep you up-to-date with the latest industry and technical news, as well as highlighting the support and services available to you from ELECSA.

We hope you like the new format. We're always keen to have your thoughts on what we are doing. Please email feedback@elecsa.co.uk with any comments or ideas of what you'd like to see in future editions of SPARK.

Thank you!

ALERT

Many contractors have told us of the problem of contacting us by telephone because of the costs involved in calling 0845 numbers from mobiles. So we now have a new mobile friendly number to call:
03333 218 220



Prepare now for 17th Edition
Amendment of Wiring Regulations

Did you know that the Wiring Regulations are being amended? The 17th Edition of the Wiring Regulations...

New Codes

There are now three codes for marking the condition of an installation, rather than the previous four:

- C1: Danger Present
- C2: Potentially Dangerous
- C3: Improvement Recommended

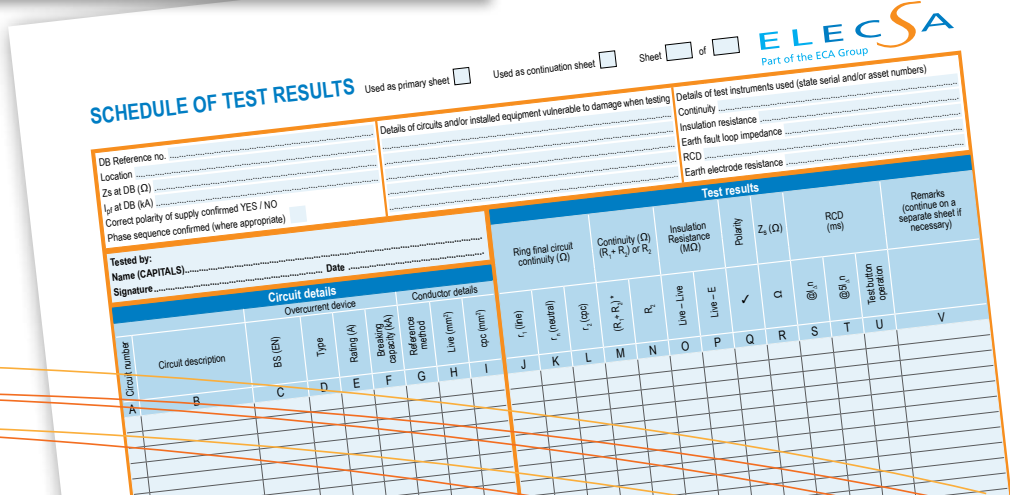
Further investigation (the old code 3) is now recorded by indicating in the appropriate box on the report. Given the new layout and requirements of the EICR, there should be very little need for further investigation to be recorded as an option. If one or more genuine C1 or C2 codes are recorded, the overall assessment must result in 'unsatisfactory' being recorded on page one of the report.

New Schedule of Inspections

The new Schedule of Inspections is laid out differently to that used on previous reports and is designed for domestic or similar installations up to 100A. The new layout follows a more logical sequence, which should result in a better standard of periodic inspections throughout the industry, ensuring important areas or items are not overlooked.

As before, all periodic inspection and testing must be carried out by a competent person, as defined in the Wiring Regulations (see regulation 621.5).

The new Electrical Installation Condition Reports, along with a new range of certificates compliant with Amd I of the regs, will be available from the ELECSA shop shortly. We have frozen the price of certificates where we can to try and lighten the burden for our contractors. Free black and white downloads will still be available from the website.



IT'S OFFICIAL! ELECSA CONTRACTOR IS TOP TRADESMAN!

There was double cause for celebration recently for ELECSA contractor Nick Blakeley. As well as being named one of Britain's top tradesmen in a national competition organised by Screwfix, he was also shortlisted for Contractor of the Year at the Electrical Industry Awards.

Nick Blakeley was named a top 10 finalist in Screwfix's Britain's Top Tradesman competition earlier in the year, beating off stiff competition from over 3,000 entries across the country. It was this national recognition for his attention to the health and safety of his clients which led to him also being shortlisted for the Electrical Industry Awards, where he was up against some big names in the industry.

An ELECSA Approved Contractor for three years since starting his business, Nick was delighted with his recognition: *"With so many entries to the competition, making the final of Britain's Top Tradesman was a real honour. And then when I heard I'd also been shortlisted for the Electrical Industry Awards, I was over the moon. I couldn't believe it; I'm only a small contractor and I've been recognised alongside the major players!"*

Helped in his business, Nick Blakeley Electrical, by his daughter Suzy and nephew Jonathan, Nick, from Benllech, Anglesey, prides himself on listening to his customers and always going the extra mile, particularly when it comes to health and safety. He is often shocked at the poor quality of installation work he finds in new clients' premises.

One recent job that tested Nick's skills was when he discovered that a house's entire pipework and bath were live due to a fault in the hot water system - risking the family's life every time they washed their hands.

Nick explains: *"I arrived to find a woman sitting on the floor, shaking. She had tried to take a bath, which could have killed her. A short circuit on the immersion heater had blown the earth wire and welded the live to the immersion heater's metalwork, causing all pipework to become live. As soon as she touched the tap and*



put her foot in the bathtub at the same time, she had a huge electric shock. It's a miracle she wasn't killed."

But it's not just the paid electrical work that drives Nick Blakeley. He firmly believes in working with the community and freely gives up his time and electrical services to help local groups.

He has been commended for his voluntary work with a certificate from the Guide Association for looking after the electrical installation and maintenance of the Guide House in Moelfre free of charge. He also received a certificate from the Welsh Assembly Government, during Volunteers Week, for giving his services free for maintenance and electrical works at the Benllech Community and Ex-Serviceman's Hall.

Nick's commitment to helping people was what caught the judges eyes at the Electrical Industry Awards and, although he didn't win the main prize, he still feels honoured to have been shortlisted.

"As you can imagine, I'm very touched by the way people have appreciated my efforts, which I feel is one way to put things back into the community. But it's not all down to me; I have this great team behind me and it's a pleasure working with them all on installations and voluntary projects alike."

ALERT

The Onsite Guide is now available from the ELECSA shop for £22. Updated to reflect Amendment 1, all businesses will be required to have a copy after 1st January 2012. To order go to www.elecsa.co.uk or call on 03333 218 220.



REVISIONS TO MCS STANDARD

MCS installers need to be aware that the MCS standard - MCS001 - has recently been revised to make it easier to read and interpret.

The overall aim of the standard has not changed and the requirements of the clauses are largely the same as before.

The major change is for those selling sales leads or contracts. The installer is now responsible for making sure everything has been quoted for accurately on the performance estimate, to avoid overselling (see page 6 for more on overselling).

Additionally, the numbering system is slightly different and there are now 18 clauses, rather than 19. Site visits, covered in the old clause 19, are still needed but these are now detailed in the main body of the document.

The timescale for transition to the revised standard is yet to be published but installers will be given plenty of time to adjust any existing systems. In many cases a simple reference system will be adequate to map the clauses.

For more information visit www.microgenerationcertification.org/installers/installers

UPDATED STANDARDS FOR HEAT PUMPS AND WIND TURBINES

Two updated sets of renewable technology standards have recently been published: MIS 3005 v3.0 for heat pumps and MIS 3003 v3.0 for wind turbines. ELECSA was one of the many industry bodies involved in preparing the revised standards, which were published in September.

We expect that all new installations will need to comply with the new standards from early December - the timescales for implementation will be published by the Microgeneration Certification Scheme very shortly and we will keep you informed.

If you are installing, or planning to install, heat pumps or wind turbines please download and review the relevant standards as soon as possible from www.microgenerationcertification.org/installers/installers where a series of webinars explaining the changes will also be available from November.

ALERT

If you are already with ELECSA for Part P and considering adding MCS, we can help in minimising assessment disruption and costs by merging assessments. Please phone the office for further advice on **03333 218 220**





PV Installers need to make sure they sell systems that perform in line with estimates given

WHAT'S THE REAL DEAL FOR SELLING SOLAR PV?

Following a recent WHICH investigation into mis-selling and mis-information of solar PV installations, ELECSA is warning its contractors to ensure they don't fall foul of the rules when advertising their services.

Installers accredited to the microgeneration certification scheme (MCS) must comply with the REAL (Renewable Energy Assurance Ltd) Consumer Code, which is specifically designed to protect consumers from the underhand sales practices that were uncovered by the WHICH investigation.

The investigation found that some firms were over-selling solar PV installations by overestimating how much energy could be generated from solar panels and how much homeowners could therefore make from Feed In Tariffs (FITs).

To ensure you comply with the Code, here's what you should know:

- MCS installers are bound by an Office of Fair Trading (OFT) regulated code of practice, which is governed by the REAL Code. The REAL Code is a requirement for MCS accreditation.
- Installers must make sure all their staff and any third parties to which they contract work are also familiar with the Code and comply with it.
- The REAL Code stresses that members must not over-sell energy generating equipment to consumers. Before a sale is agreed they must provide customers with technical assurances and a credible written estimate in line with MCS standards.
- The code stringently governs the 'Behaviour of Sales Representatives' and stresses what performance information members must include in their estimates to customers. These estimates must avoid jargon and be in a format that is easy to understand for consumers.

- Members must carry out a technical audit before they produce an estimate. Factors to consider when carrying out an audit for solar PV are: the orientation of the property; the pitch of the roof and any shading.
- The customer must be allowed a cooling off period of seven working days to cancel the contract without penalty. How to cancel must be explained to the customer before they sign, and work must not commence during the cooling off period, unless the customer gives written consent.
- Each year, REAL audits a third of its members to check they are complying. It also sends consumer satisfaction surveys to a further third of its members for their customers to complete. Like WHICH, it uses mystery shoppers to inspect one in 10 of its members and randomly checks companies' compliance.
- REAL has a stringent complaints process and 'names and shames' companies guilty of high pressure selling on its website.

"There is simply no-where to hide," says ECA certification director, Chris Beedel. "MCS accredited contractors are regularly audited and non-compliance will be subject to a full investigation that could lead to suspension of membership and MCS accreditation."

"Any MCS installer using discount offers to put pressure on consumers to sign up immediately runs the risk of losing their livelihood. Many consumers stand to gain from the Government's FIT scheme and it is a shame that a minority of companies can give the sector a bad name. Householders will only make the switch, however, if they can have faith in the people and products they are investing in," adds Beedel.

For more information, performance guidance and some model documents, visit www.realassurance.org.uk/members

The full REAL Consumer Code can be found at: www.realassurance.org.uk/pdf/consumer-code.pdf

BEWARE OF 'GREENWASHING'

It's not just the REAL Code that installers need to comply with when marketing their business. The Advertising Standards Agency (ASA), which governs advertising in the UK, has dealt with a number of complaints in relation to deceptive 'green' claims made in advertising materials.

'Greenwashing' is defined as "the deceptive use of green PR or marketing to promote a misleading perception that a company's policies or products are environmentally friendly." (Wikipedia)

In other words, you must ensure that what you say in any promotional activity or advertising is accurate and can be substantiated in the event of a complaint.

Indeed, compliance with the ASA is a requirement of the REAL code. As the ASA now covers digital advertising, websites and marketing communications as well as traditional forms of advertising, contractors are advised to ensure all of their promotional material, not just that for green technology, cannot be construed as misleading.

SMILE FOR THE CAMERA

A quick reminder that we can now also offer photo ID cards for those who want them.

To apply for a photo ID card, simply login to 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 **03333 218 220**.



GET YOUR INSURANCE ONLINE

Tradesman Insurance

This ECIS comprehensive Tradesman policy is now available to purchase online. This competitive policy includes: core Public Liability from £2m to £5m; optional Employers' Liability with up to three clerical staff covered at no additional cost; optional cover for tools, contract works and personal accident. Cover is available for contractors with a turnover of up to £500,000 and up to seven manual employees.

Van Insurance

ECIS is also offering insurance for commercial vehicles, which includes free motor legal expenses cover and optional protected no claims discount. Comprehensive cover also includes loss of keys and a courtesy vehicle in the event of a claim.

To buy online visit www.elecsa.co.uk and login with your ELECSA details. Payment can be made by credit/debit card or monthly instalment.

Call ECIS on **0845 634 5432** or contact ecins@eca.co.uk for further information or ask your insurance broker to make contact.





17TH EDITION AMENDMENTS DVD NOW AVAILABLE

To help contractors understand the changes, a brand new DVD is now available from the online shop, costing just £6. The DVD is ideal for those who already have their 17th Edition qualification but need an overview of the amendments. Buy it online now!
www.electsa.co.uk

17TH EDITION AMENDMENT I

Amendment I (Amd I) of the 17th Edition of the Wiring Regulations (BS7671:2008) was published on 1st July this year. As well as introducing Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR), there are a number of other changes you need to be aware of to avoid getting your wires crossed.

Overview

Amd I has been made to reflect harmonisation with the International IEC 60364 and European CENELEC HD 60384 series of standards. A great majority of the changes are editorial in nature. As the changes don't constitute a new edition of the Wiring Regulations, your current 17th Edition qualifications are still valid. However, all Qualified Supervisors must have their 17th Edition qualifications by 1st January 2012. All businesses will also need to hold a copy of the new BS7671 Requirements for Electrical Installations (the Wiring Regulations) and the On-Site Guide from 1st January 2012.

Up until the 31st December 2011, you still have the choice to work with either Amd I or the existing standard, but not both. You must clarify with the person ordering the work which edition you are using and you must specify it on the installation certificate. All installations designed after 31st December 2011 must comply with BS7671 Amd I.

Main changes

There is a summary of the main changes in BS7671 on pages 7 & 8 of the Wiring Regulations and what follows is our overview. BS7671 still contains seven parts but there is a new numbering system for UK only national regulations – regulations ending in 100, 101, 102 etc signify those that apply only in the UK (e.g. Reg 433.1.5 is now 433.1.103), with which all contractors will need to familiarise themselves.

In Part 4, a new Section 444 has been introduced for measures against electromagnetic disturbances to help installers meet the EU Directive for fixed installations introduced in July 2007. Also in Part 4, regulation 433.1.1 references Surge Protection Devices (SPDs), which is then detailed in Part 5, Section 534. This new section has been introduced to help protect sensitive electronic equipment which is now widely in use, and is a requirement of the Lightning Protection Standard (BS EN 62305).

Other changes to Part 5 cover: prefabricated wiring systems intended for permanent connection in fixed installations; cables installed under floors or above ceilings must be positioned to avoid damage from contact with the floor or ceiling; and all connections must be accessible for inspection, testing and maintenance, unless they comply with BS 5733 for a maintenance-free accessory.

The biggest change

Part 6 contains arguably the biggest change for most contractors – Periodic Inspection Reports (PIRs) are being replaced by Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs). These will be used for domestic and similar installations up to 100A and will include a Condition Report Inspection Schedule. For more information on EICRs, see the separate article on pages 2 & 3 of Spark.

Special Locations

Part 7 details two new Special Locations: 710 – Medical Locations and 729 – Operating and Maintenance Gangways. Medical locations are now segregated into three zones depending on the procedures undertaken in the area. Section 729 sets out information on the minimum distance, width, height etc. between equipment and the building fabric for electrical switchgear and equipment in gangways.

Appendices

There are now 16 appendices with the new Appendix 16 referring to the installation and connection of Surge Protection Devices (SPDs). Content from Appendices 11 and 12 has moved to Appendix 4, with 11 and 12 left blank for future use.

For more information on the 17th Edition amendments and how they affect you call our technical helpline on 03333 218 220

SSE ADDS ELECSA CONTRACTORS TO ITS CUT-OUT SEALS POLICY

ELECSA contractors have been recognised by Scottish and Southern Electric (SSE) in their policy document 'Procedure for the Removal and Replacement of Company Cut-Out Seals by Electrical Contractors'.

This means that, should you need to temporarily de-energise the electrical supply of an SSE customer, as an ELECSA contractor, you will be able to do so quickly and easily by contacting SSE directly.

If you need the electrical connection to a property to be temporarily de-energised, in order to facilitate safe working on an electrical installation, your first point of contact is usually the energy supplier (the company that sends the customer their electricity bill), of which there are several across the UK.

For more information on electricity distributors and suppliers, see the article on the back page.



HAPPY CONTRACTORS

A big thank you to those who responded to our annual customer satisfaction survey over the summer. This year we had a record 20% response rate, with the overwhelming majority of you making very positive comments. Nearly three-quarters of you think ELECSA registration is good value for money and a whopping 94% would recommend us to a colleague.

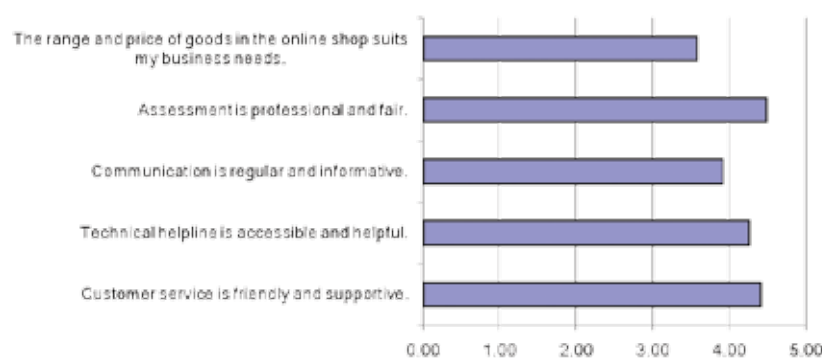
More than half of you think our assessment is professional and fair and rate our customer service and technical helpline very highly. You also like our new photo ID cards and think the technical workshops are a valuable benefit.

However, you would like to see a greater range in our online shop and think that certification software and online or DVD based training would be useful.

We're keen to address these issues and provide training appropriate to your needs. The ECA 17th Edition online course launched earlier this year (see page 10) and is already proving successful. A DVD of the 17th Edition amendments has also just been released (see page 8) and more e-learning will be developed as the opportunities arise.

Finally, over 60 per cent of you feel that your customers need help with energy efficiency advice and information on renewable energy generation. The ECA provides a range of training courses in order to help you explain the benefits of renewable technologies to your customers. And as an ELECSA Approved Contractor you can get discounted rates, call **0845 872 5361** to get information on dates and locations.

How you rated ELECSA goods and services provided



ALERT **HOW MUCH IT COSTS**

For ELECSA contractors, the course alone costs just £255 +VAT and with the assessment it's £315 +VAT. Further discounts apply to those who are also ECA members – check the website for details.

ON COURSE, ONLINE

Aimed at contractors who don't already have a 17th Edition qualification, the ECA 17th Edition online course is ideal for those who need a flexible approach to training away from the traditional classroom environment. We recently caught up with two of its graduates to find out how e-learning benefitted them.

Completely interactive, the online course consists of audio and video content, practical examples and lots of practise questions to help candidates understand the wiring regulations. Accessed via an online portal, students complete each section in their

own time and can take a mock exam at the end.

One of the major benefits is that students can do it in their own time, saving them precious hours during the working day.

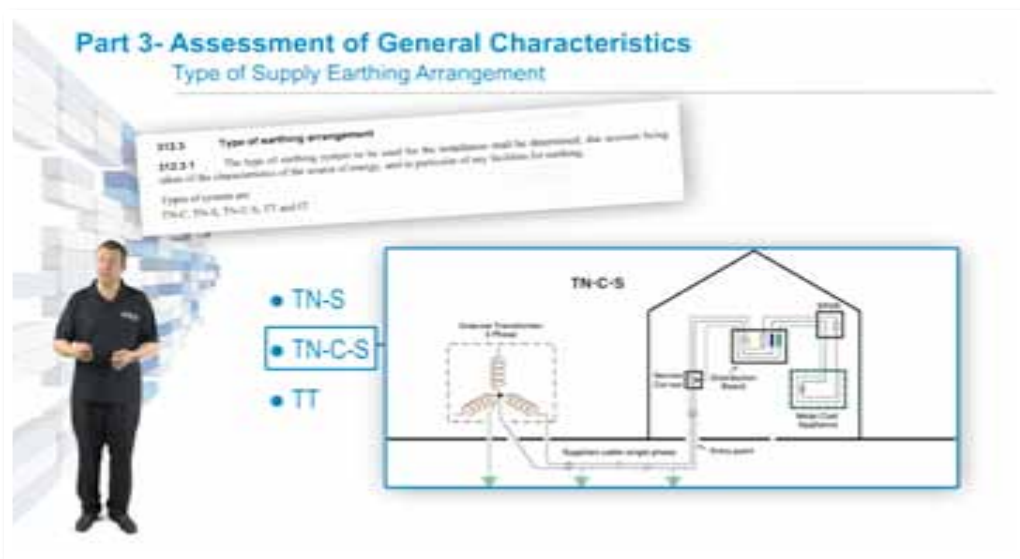
Ashley Newbery, of Newbery Electricals, explains: "The real benefit is that you can fit it around other things. When you're running a business, you don't have time to take three days out to go on a training course."

Graham Harper of G. Harper Electrical agrees: "I decided to do the course so that I could set up my own business. I was still working for my old employer at

the time, so being able to fit it around work was crucial."

Another big advantage of the online course is the flexibility it provides to complete it at your own pace. Graham felt this was better than a full-time course because spreading the learning out helped him absorb it better. In fact both Graham and Ashley found that by doing a bit everyday, they were able to complete the course within a couple of weeks and get to grips with each section before moving onto the next.

Graham says, "The course is really well-organised into the same sections that you find in the Regs Book. This is extremely

**THE GRADUATES**

Ashley Newbery of Newbery Electricals
www.newberyelectricals.co.uk, tel. 01227 711173

Ashley runs the family business, along with his dad who set up the firm in 1976. They cover Canterbury and the surrounding areas for domestic, industrial and commercial electrical work. They have been ECA and ELECSA members since Part P came into force in 2005.



helpful because you can do a section at a time and do as much or as little as you have time for. You can also repeat the sections as many times as you want, until you've got the hang of each one."

Ashley found that that the videos helped him learn a lot easier. "I found it very useful to be reading through my Regs Book at the same time as the tutor in the video was talking me through the key points. This meant I really read the book and learned what's in each section. This is invaluable because it saves you wasting time flicking through the Regs Book during the exam."

But by far the most useful part of the online course was, for Ashley, the questions at the end of each stage. "Answering the questions was like a mini exam practise and they made sure I learned about each section before I moved onto the next."

Graham also found the questions and mock exam helpful: "The mini-quiz at the end of each section helped test my knowledge, which is really useful when you're against the clock in the actual exam. And the mock exam at the end ensured I knew what to expect when doing the real thing."

The final assessment still needs to be taken at an approved City and Guilds or EAL training centre but the ECA offers a discount to contractors who book both the course and final exam together (see How much it costs). And the online course costs, on average, a couple of hundred pounds less than a classroom course, providing a very cost effective option.

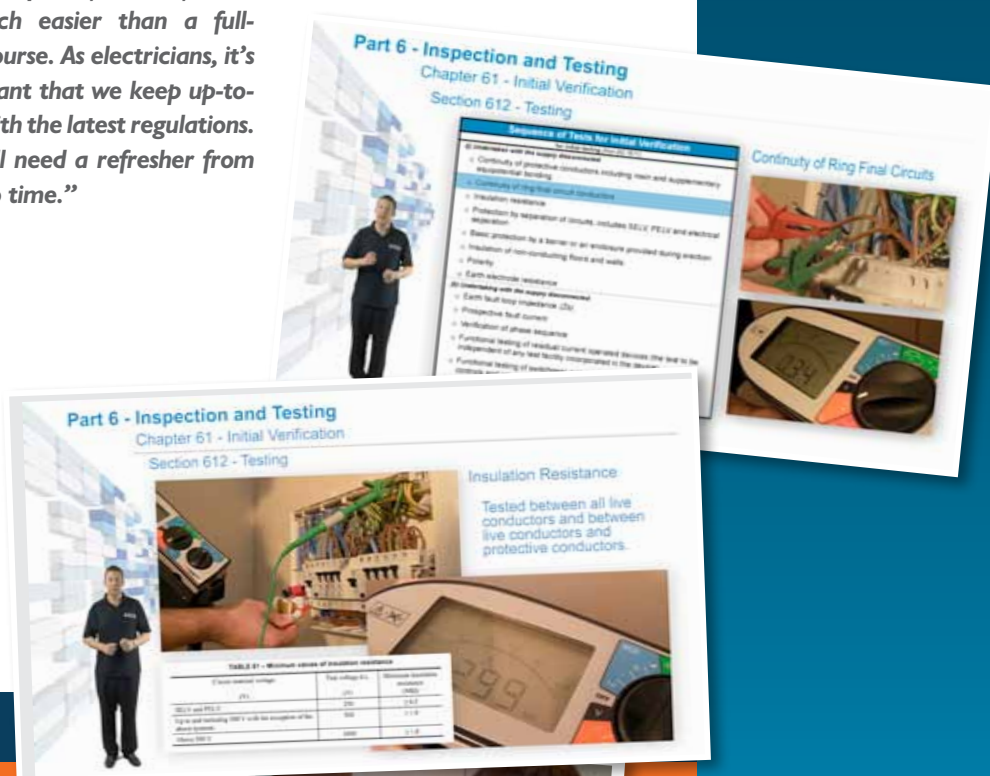
So would they do it online again?

"Most certainly," says Graham. "In fact I've already recommended it to other electricians!"

"Definitely," says Ashley, "It's so much easier than a full-time course. As electricians, it's important that we keep up-to-date with the latest regulations. You still need a refresher from time to time."

Amendment 1 of the 17th Edition came into force in July - the course material has been updated to reflect these changes. Since all Qualified Supervisors need to have their 17th Edition qualifications before 31st December 2011, applicants may find that the online course is the quickest and easiest way to ensure they fulfil the criteria of their Part P registration.

For further information on the course, to view a sample clip or to book your place, visit www.eca.co.uk/online17th.



Graham Harper of G. Harper Electrical,
tel. 0115 877 8631

With over 30 years' experience in the electrical industry, Graham started his own business in June this year, following redundancy. He carries out a variety of electrical work in and around Beeston, Nottingham, including domestic, commercial, industrial and PAT testing.





RENEWABLES INCENTIVES LATEST

News that the Renewable Heat Incentive for non-domestic installations was to be delayed was disappointing. But Chris Beedel, ECA certification director, said it was better to be late than never.

“Whilst we are disappointed to hear that the commercial RHI will be delayed, we appreciate that this ground-breaking incentive is a world first and therefore warrants the required consultations to ensure it can deliver to its full potential. It is simply a case of better to get it right, than get it right now so we do not need go back to the drawing board later on.”

The RHI was supposed to have come into force in July, but the Government backed scheme to provide financial support for installing low carbon heat technologies suffered a last minute setback after delays in securing state aid approval forced the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) to put back its launch until November.

The RHI, to be administered by Ofgem (Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets), aims to provide continuous financial support for over 20 years to micro-renewable heat generators in England, Scotland and Wales and will work in a similar way to the current Feed-in Tariff scheme.

The first phase, which supports non-domestic installations only (including businesses, public sector, charities, not-for-profit organisations and industry), was due to start on 30 September 2011 but has been delayed due to issues securing state aid.

A DECC spokesman said: ***“We are fully committed to introducing the Renewable Heat Incentive. However, we understand that the European Commission state aid approval for the RHI will be subject to a reduction in the large***

biomass tariff. We expect to receive written confirmation of this very shortly. This means we now need to change the regulations before the scheme can open to applications. We understand this is frustrating for industry who are already gearing up for the RHI, however we hope to get this sorted out soon and open the scheme before the end of November.”

For certain types of small and medium-sized installations (up to and including 45kWth), both installers and equipment must be certified under the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) or equivalent standard.

These include:

- Biomass boilers (including CHP biomass boilers)
- Solar Thermal
- Ground Source Heat Pumps
- Water Source Heat Pumps

There are additional technologies covered by the RHI but outside of the MCS standards such as:

- On-Site Biogas combustion
- Deep Geothermal
- Energy from Municipal Solid Waste
- Injection of biomethane into the grid

At present the RHI does not include Air Source Heat Pumps, however they may well be included at a later date once a suitable metering solution has been agreed.

A second phase of the RHI, starting in late 2012, aims to establish support for similar micro-renewables in the domestic sector.

For more information on the RHI, visit DECC www.decc.gov.uk or Ofgem www.ofgem.gov.uk. The full list of RHI tariffs can also be downloaded by visiting either of these websites.

DOING THE ROUNDS

We've been out and about meeting some of you at a number of tradeshows recently:

Renewables Roadshow

The Renewables Roadshow, powered by Plumb Center, saw some 60+ companies and trade bodies, covering all areas of renewable technology visit Bolton, Coventry, Cheltenham, London, Harrogate and Glasgow during September. Each show was brimming with visitors eager to learn about how they can get involved with the new technologies and the opportunities they present for their businesses.

At the ELECSA stand, experts were on hand to answer questions about the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS). They offered practical advice on MCS assessment and how to become accredited. Visitors also learned about the wide range of support and training available from the ECA, including technical courses and the MCS Made Easy one-day course, designed to help contractors prepare for their MCS assessment.

The Renewables Roadshow will be back in the Autumn of 2012 and will be returning to Harrogate International, the Ricoh Arena, the Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre and Wembley Stadium. Two new venues, including Westpoint Arena Exeter and Event City Manchester, will be added to the itinerary for next year.

More at www.renewables-roadshow.co.uk

ELEX Trade Shows

We recently attended Professional Electrician's ELEX trade show in Coventry's Ricoh Arena on 15th-16th September. We will also be at the Sandown Park Racecourse show on 10th-11th November. The Sandown Park event is earlier than usual this year, in the hope of avoiding any heavy snow, as was experienced last year.



On our stand there are always assessors on hand to discuss any queries you may have. As well as exhibiting, ELECSA is an active participant in the IET/Electrical Safety Council forums. Our senior technical people are taking part in industry debates and delivering a 30-minute presentation on the new codings being used in the Electrical Installation Condition Reports.

The ELEX shows are always very busy and we enjoy getting out to meet contractors and find out what's affecting you.

More at www.elexshow.info

SPARKS Roadshow

This show is aimed at current college students and has adopted more of a roadshow format this year. ELECSA went to Swindon and Great Yarmouth back in May and was at the Bolton and Durham shows in October. The SPARK shows are an opportunity for us to highlight ELECSA, Part P and MCS certification to students and tutors alike.

More at www.sparkstudent.co.uk

Worcester Bosch

We are continuing to support Worcester Bosch with their renewables programme. After last year's roadshow visited 31 towns and cities across the UK, this year we have been to a further 27 where we have provided updates on the opportunities available within the renewables sector.

17th Edition Update Seminars

Over recent months we held a total of 45 events in towns and cities across the UK, where we provided contractors with information on the latest 17th Edition amendments and gave them the chance to ask their own questions. More on 17th Edition changes on pages 2- 3 and 8.



The Premium Payment scheme is run by the Energy Saving Trust and more information is available at www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/RHPP or by calling 0800 512 012

GOVERNMENT INCENTIVE TO HELP HOUSEHOLDERS INSTALL ECO-HEAT TECHNOLOGY

Despite the Renewable Heat Incentive being delayed (see page 12), it's not all bad news for consumers looking for some cash to help them switch to renewables. Over the summer, the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) announced that UK householders across the country could get up to £1,250 of Government funding to help towards the cost of installing renewable heating systems such as biomass boilers, air or ground source heat pumps and solar thermal panels.

Aimed mainly at the four million households that rely on more carbon intensive technologies such as heating oil and electric fires, the Government's £15 million 'Renewable Heat Premium Payment' scheme opened for applications in August and is available until March 2012, during which time it is expected to support up to 25,000 installations.

"This is good news for our MCS registrants who will benefit from this unexpected windfall," said Chris

Beedel, ECA certification director. "It should also provide an incentive for other electrical contractors to apply for their MCS accreditation as this is the only way they can secure business in this new and developing technological field."

DECC wants participants to provide detailed feedback on their experience through a set of surveys which will allow the Government to gather information to better understand renewable heat technologies. DECC will also provide, for a significant sample of participants, additional meters for their heating equipment in order to compare manufacturers' and installers' claims about performance with real data on energy use.

Householders will need to ensure they have basic energy efficiency measures in place before applying and grants are available on a first come first served basis. There's still a lot of money available – at the time of going to press only £1.6 million of the £15 million fund had been claimed.

LEAN AND FIT

Increasing speculation about the future of the Feed in Tariffs was confirmed as a government consultation was announced on 31st October. Greg Barker, Minister of State for Climate Change, proposed that future Feed in Tariff payments should be cut from 43.3p to 21p for systems up to 4Kw.

Systems already installed and earning FIT payments will continue to receive the existing tariff payments. However, installations with an eligibility date (i.e. registered and a contract in place with the FIT licensee) after 12th December 2011 will also transfer to the new lower rate in April 2012.

Brought in April 2009, Feed in Tariffs were intended to kick start the renewable technology industry. Since then, the UK has seen over 80,000 installations and 250Mw of capacity added to its renewable energy generation output.

The rampant success of the Feed in Tariffs has led many to question whether their continued use can be viewed as fair and equitable. While the scheme offered generous payments, the cost of panels and inverters has fallen dramatically and it is this situation that is likely to lead to a cut in the tariff payments.

Whilst on the surface this may appear to be bad news for the industry, it is a signal that the industry is in much

better shape than the government had anticipated. The government is clear that the renewable sector has a long term future and this consultation is to ensure that the industry does not suffer a 'boom and bust' economic cycle based on large subsidies.

At ELECSA, Griff Thomas, Technical Manager for Renewables, agrees that a cut in the Feed in Tariff can be afforded without damaging future prospects. "The high Feed in Tariff payments have served their purpose in getting renewable technologies more widely understood and accepted and it has outperformed all expectations. If the Tariffs continue at the current rate, we run the risk of the market adopting a 'gold rush' mentality that will lead to the quick demise of the industry which clearly benefits no-one. We all want a sustainable industry for the long term."

So whilst the Feed in Tariffs may be reduced in the future, the returns will still be there for customers looking to invest in solar PV and will remain a growth technology. In addition, upcoming initiatives such as the Green Deal are likely to include renewable technologies ensuring that householders take a whole house approach to their energy use. ELECSA will continue to support and advise contractors looking to move into the renewables sector as it will remain an important sector for years to come.

ECA & EDMUNDSON COLLABORATE TO OFFER DEAL ON RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGY TRAINING

The ECA and Edmundson Electrical are working together to provide a renewables support package that includes the full range of ECA renewable training courses to Edmundson customers.

Following the success of the ECA/ELECSA renewables roadshow last year, which saw their renewables truck pitching up at many Edmundson outlets across the country, ECA is now offering packages to Edmundson clients to encourage them to get involved in the renewables industry. The packages include:

- Open access to all ECA scheduled courses
- In-house training courses at any suitable location for their 3-day PV course and/or one-day MCS Made Easy course
- Tailored solutions for technology specific and/or sales based training for Edmundson Electrical employees.

The in-house and tailored solutions will be designed with flexibility in mind, to meet individual requirements of the companies involved.

ECA Certification has also developed a streamlined MCS registration system, enabling candidates to register for their MCS assessment at the same time. This improves efficiency and enhances the registrant's experience, encouraging them to complete the certification process.

Chris Beedel, ECA Certification Director, said: *"ECA and Edmundson Electrical have a long-standing relationship, which we are cementing*

with the development of the full range of training and certification services. Helping Edmundson Electrical customers gain access to recognised training and the support they need to become MCS accredited will help Edmundson and their customers take advantage of the opportunities that the renewables sector offers."

MCS registrants also gain access to the ECA's building control notification portal free of charge.

ALERT

We have always tried to be on the side of the contractor which is what we believe makes us different. For those struggling with their finances in these austere times, we have a number of payment plans and options available to you.

Call us on **03333 218 220** to find a solution that suits you.



WHATS THE GREEN DEAL?

There is a new initiative being progressed by government with the aim of retrofitting UK housing stock with a variety of solutions to help reduce our energy consumption. Known as the Green Deal, it is a way of financing certain qualifying home improvements via payback through energy bills.

The details are still being worked on including how householders will access the funds and how contractors will get the work. The current timetable is that the first Green Deal funds will be available sometime in Autumn 2012. We are anticipating detailed industry guidance in Spring 2012 and will of course let you know what that is as soon as we have more information.



The fourteen distribution areas in GB are now operated by just 5 DNOs

CHANGING FACE OF THE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY AND GENERATION INDUSTRY

When the electricity industry was privatised in the UK some twenty years ago, there were fourteen Public Electricity Suppliers (PESs), which replaced the old area and Scottish electricity boards.

Today, while the geographical areas of these former PESs remain unchanged, the industry itself is somewhat different. Distribution has been separated altogether from supply, although the former PES areas are used as the basis of today's distribution areas.

In England and Wales, there are twelve licensed distribution areas and in Scotland there are two. These fourteen distribution areas across Great Britain are now operated by just five Distribution Network Operator (DNO) companies:

- 1) **Western Power**
(East Midlands – Midlands – Swalec – SWEB)
- 2) **UK Power Networks**
(Eastern – London – Seeboard)
- 3) **SP Energy Networks**
(Scottish power – Norweb – Manweb)

4) **CE Electricity UK / Northern Powergrid** (Northern NEDL – Yorkshire YEDL)

5) **SSE (Southern Electric - Scottish Hydro Electric)**

The DNO companies are the owners and operators of the network of towers and cables that bring electricity from the National Transmission Network to homes and businesses. Note that they are not the organisations that sell electricity to the consumer.

This is the responsibility of the suppliers. They will be your first point of contact when arranging an electricity supply to domestic, commercial and smaller industrial premises. All enquiries for temporary de-energisation should be directed to the customer's electricity supplier (who send the customer their electricity bill). The supplier's telephone number is on the bill and they will require the electricity supply number or Metering Point Administration Number (MPAN), again usually found on the bill.

PART P CONSULTATION

You may have heard that the government is currently undertaking a review of Part P along with other aspects of the Building Regulations. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the building regulations remain an effective tool in developing and managing UK buildings. With increasing demands on both the capacity of existing stock as well as managing our future energy use, the building regulations have come under increasing scrutiny to ensure they help rather than hinder progress.

ELECSA is working with other industry bodies, including the other Part P scheme

providers, to demonstrate the contribution that the introduction of Part P has brought in improving standards of electrical safety. We argue that with our constant increasing demand for electrically powered equipment, particularly in the home, these safety standards will be even more important in the future.

We know, especially with the feedback we get from you, that the system is far from perfect. We believe that Part P can and should be improved and will continue to work with others in lobbying government to strengthen the existing system. As the consultation process continues, we will keep you updated.

ECA Certification Limited
Mansfield Business Centre
Ashfield Avenue
Mansfield
NG18 2AE

T +44 (0)3333 218 220
F +44 (0)1623 683 001
E enquiries@elecса.co.uk
www.elecса.co.uk