

INFORMATION BULLETIN

December 2012
#0003

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT SAFETY SYSTEM

This information bulletin is for anyone who intends to sell, import or manufacture electrical equipment in Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

Electrical Equipment Safety Laws are changing. New laws will commence from 1 March 2013 in Queensland and shortly after that in other States and Territories.

This change will implement an Electrical Equipment Safety System (EESS) that will change the requirements for business who sell, supply or import electrical equipment.

The introduction of the EESS is being co-ordinated by ERAC and its main features are:

- It covers 'in-scope electrical equipment'.
- It involves requirements for registration and certification of certain equipment.
- It involves registration of 'responsible suppliers' of in-scope electrical equipment.
- There will be a national database which will have equipment details of all equipment required to be certified and registered as well as details of all registered responsible suppliers.
- Registered responsible suppliers will be required use the regulatory compliance mark (RCM) on all equipment they supply.
- Equipment Safety Rules (aka 'scheme rules') have been written to guide consistency.
- In-scope electrical equipment cannot be sold or offered for sale unless it complies with the EESS requirements.
- Additional compliance, surveillance and post market enforcement activity.

Obligations

Under the EESS, there are requirements for **sellers** (including retail, wholesale, auction, markets, internet sales etc), **importers** and **manufacturers** of electrical equipment:

- **Sellers:** A seller of electrical equipment must not sell 'in-scope' electrical equipment unless the equipment is linked to a Responsible Supplier and, if Level 2 or Level 3 equipment, is registered on the national database.
- **Importers and Manufacturers:** An importer or manufacturer must register as a Responsible Supplier on the National Database. Responsible Suppliers must also ensure level 2 and 3 equipment they supply is registered on the National Database. Note: level 1 equipment does not require registration, but can be voluntarily registered.

In-Scope Electrical Equipment

Under the EESS, in-scope electrical equipment is defined as equipment which is low voltage (which includes equipment rated between 50Vac to 1000Vac) and designed or marketed as suitable for household, personal or similar use. The EESS has three categories of electrical equipment: Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 (the three levels of equipment category have different certification and registration requirements depending on the electrical safety risks associated with each category).

Responsible Supplier

Under the EESS, a Responsible Supplier is a person/company who manufactures in-scope electrical equipment in, or imports in-scope electrical equipment into, Australia (i.e. the entity that first brings the electrical equipment onto the Australian marketplace).

Responsible Suppliers must

- be a legal entity from Australia or New Zealand;
- register as responsible suppliers on the national database; and
- register all types of Level 2 and Level 3 equipment they sell.

Note: Responsible suppliers can also voluntarily register Level 1 equipment they sell.

Responsible Suppliers have obligations for the safety of the equipment they manufacturer or import, to ensure their equipment meets relevant standards and is electrically safe.

National Database

Under the EESS, the National Database is the gateway for the supply of in-scope electrical equipment to Australia. The database records the registration details of Responsible Suppliers of electrical equipment in Australia and also records the details of all Level 2 and Level 3 electrical equipment.

The national database is located at www.erac.gov.au

Marking of in-scope electrical equipment

All in-scope electrical equipment is required to be marked with its brand or trade name, its model number and the Regulatory Compliance Mark (RCM) as detailed in AS/NZS 4417.1:2012. The RCM symbol is shown below:-



Equipment Safety Rules (scheme rules)

The Equipment safety Rules (scheme rules) are available at www.erac.gov.au

Transition periods

Under the EESS there are transition periods to allow for compliance to be achieved.

Responsible suppliers have a six month timeframe to comply with registration requirements as a responsible supplier and registration of Level 2 and Level 3 equipment.

Use of the RCM as the compliance mark on electrical equipment has a five year phase in period for sellers, and three years for Responsible Suppliers.

Who to contact with questions or concerns

For more information visit the Electrical Regulatory Authorities Council (ERAC) website: www.erac.gov.au.

Notes:

1/ **ERAC** is the Electrical Regulatory Authorities Council, the peak body of electrical safety regulators in Australia and New Zealand with membership from all States and Territories and New Zealand. ERAC acts to ensure electrical safety regulatory systems are contemporary and harmonised wherever possible.

2/ For sale of equipment in NSW, the current requirements of NSW will continue to apply separate to the requirements of the EESS in all other jurisdictions.

3/ New Zealand intend to align with the EESS and introduce complimentary laws.