

Code of Practice (Electricity)

Service and Installation Rules of New South Wales

December 2007



NSW Government
Department of Water & Energy

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Code of Practice – Service and Installation Rules of New South Wales, December 2007

Note: This information does not constitute legal advice

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Note: In April 2007, the Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability merged with the water-related functions of the Department of Natural Resources as well as the Metropolitan Water Directorate from the NSW Cabinet Office to become the Department of Water and Energy.

1. PREFACE

This Code was prepared by the Department of Water and Energy (DWE) with a working group with representatives from the following organisations:

Office of Fair Trading
Country Energy
EnergyAustralia
Integral Energy
National Electrical Contractors Association (NSW Chapter)
Accredited Service Provider Association

The Department of Water and Energy is responsible for monitoring the impact and further development of this Code of Practice and the Service and Installation Rules of NSW through the Service and Installation Rules Committee (SIRC).

The Department has consulted widely throughout the industry and circulated the draft to stakeholders. It has resolved outstanding issues and developed this Code and the referenced Service and Installation Rules of NSW.

It will in the future continue this process to regularly consider issues raised by stakeholders and address the need for revising the Code and the Service and Installation Rules of NSW annually as a minimum.

A future review of the Service and Installation Rules of NSW publication will include:

- the insertion of any future amendments;
- any proposed editorial amendments which have been held in abeyance; and
- greater use of national standards where possible.

Comments or inquiries on the provisions of the Code and the Service and Installation Rules of NSW may be directed to:

Manager Energy Networks Performance Policy
Department of Water and Energy
Level 17, 227 Elizabeth Street
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Phone: 02 8281 7777
Email: information@dwe.nsw.gov.au

2. SCOPE

This Code of Practice and the referenced Service and Installation Rules of NSW set out:

- the technical requirements for electrical installations to be safely, reliably and efficiently connected to electricity distribution systems; and
- the associated obligations and procedures of customers, installing contractors and distributors.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the Code of Practice Contestable Works.

This Code applies to electricity distributors, retail suppliers, customers, contractors and service providers requiring connection of premises to the distribution network.

As a Code of Practice it is to:

- give guidance and minimum requirements for provision of customer connection services;
- be adopted by Network Operators in accordance with notice given by the Director General of DWE under the provisions of the *Electricity Supply (Safety and Network Management) Regulation 2002*;
- be followed by customers and/or service providers unless there is an alternative course of action (which with the agreement of the distributor) achieves the same or better safe, reliable and efficient connection to the electricity distribution system;
- be used in support of enforcement provisions of the *Electricity Supply Act 1995*; and
- be used to support prosecution for failing to comply with or contravening provisions of the Act or associated regulations.

3. OBJECTIVES

The Code of Practice has the following objectives for connection of customer premises:

- compliance with the requirements of the *Electricity Supply Act 1995* for distributors;
- compliance with the safety requirements of the *Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2004*; its Regulations and AS/NZS 3000 - Electrical Installations - (also known as the Wiring Rules);
- preservation of market integrity, security, reliability and safety of the network, while minimising interference between and to its customers;
- promotion of industry uniformity through standardising practices;
- provision of consistent requirements from distributors for Service Providers across all NSW jurisdictions;
- specification of service requirements to promote industry standardisation and allow acceptance of preferred and alternative methods;
- specification of requirements for uniformity and safety of electrical installation as permitted by the AS/NZS 3000;
- provision of information to the electricity supply industry and the electrical contracting industry which enables them to work together to promote standardisation of systems and equipment; and
- identification and formulation of recommendations on future requirements of the AS/NZS 3000 and legislation.

4. REFERENCE TO SERVICE AND INSTALLATION RULES

Under this Code of Practice the electricity distributors recognise as the industry standard of best practice the Service and Installation Rules of NSW published periodically by the Department of Water and Energy.

This Code recognises the Service and Installation Rules of NSW and does not give Electricity Distributors the authority to create Local Service and Installation Rules.

The Service and Installation Rules of NSW Committee will meet at least three times a year where necessary to make amendments and consider pertinent issues. There is provision in the Terms of Reference - Service and Installation Rules of NSW Committee (Appendix A) to hold extraordinary meetings to make amendments to the Service and Installation Rules of NSW. This negates the need for electricity distributors to create subsidiary local requirements.

This Code aims to promote efficiency in the provision of customer connection services, with a balance of competition and regulation through the standardisation of design and connection procedures.

Alternative Methods

Where the customer proposes an alternative method which provides the same or better outcome the local distributor may accept the method on application. Acceptance of an alternative method does not imply automatic recognition as an industry standard.

An electricity distributor must deal with proposals for alternative methods of providing customer connection services in accordance with a documented procedure obtainable by the proposer which details the method of examining a proposal including:

- the method of making the proposal;
- who decides whether or not the proposal is acceptable;
- the time allowed for the decision; and
- a provision for fair and impartial dispute resolution.

5. NON-COMPLIANCE

Where the customer and/or Service Provider do not comply with the Service and Installation Rules of NSW or a distributor approved, customer proposed alternative method, the electricity distributor may:

- refuse, suspend or discontinue supply; or
- require the customer or Service Provider to rectify the service work or comply with the conditions of connection of supply.

APPENDIX A

SERVICE AND INSTALLATION RULES OF NSW COMMITTEE: Terms of Reference

Background

In 2006 the Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability* released the revised Service and Installation Rules of New South Wales 2006. These rules are incorporated by reference in the Code of Practice Service and Installation Rules and were prepared for the Department by a Working Group comprising representatives of the New South Wales electricity distributors, contractors, Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability, and Office of Fair Trading.

The Service Rules are a recognised industry code intended to provide requirements that an electricity distributor should apply in connecting a customer to its distribution system. These rules are essentially technical and safety in nature with a focus on supply reliability and efficient connection services.

* Note: In April 2007, the Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability merged with the water-related functions of the Department of Natural Resources as well as the Metropolitan Water Directorate from the NSW Cabinet Office to become the Department of Water and Energy.

Committee Objective

To maintain the application and currency of the Service and Installation Rules of NSW 2006 and to ensure their continued relevance.

DWE will facilitate the ongoing maintenance of the appropriateness and relevance of the Service and Installation Rules of NSW and associated Code of Practice with a view to:

- Having the Service and Installation Rules of NSW (SIRC) meet at least three times a year, where necessary, to make amendments and consider pertinent issues.
- Inviting members of Service and Installation Rules Committees (or similar committees) from other jurisdictions to at least one meeting each calendar year;
- Permit corresponding committee members to attend committee meetings on invitation;
- Holding extraordinary meetings to facilitate amendments to the Service and Installation Rules of NSW. This will include meetings by alternative means including: conference call, electronic means, and any other suitable technology. This will negate the need for electricity distributors to create local requirements;
- Forming either a National or Eastern Australian Service and Installation Committee with a view to create a cross jurisdictional Service and Installation Rules after three years; and
- The thorough revision of the rules in terms of content and level of detail in between three to five years from publication of the most recent edition.

Scope

The scope of the maintenance is limited to the Service and Installation Rules of NSW and its associated code of practice.

Method or Approach

The maintenance will be undertaken on a consultative basis by DWE. Stakeholders will be given the opportunity to suggest outcomes, format and content. A project management approach will be used to maintain the rules.

Deliverables / Output

The committee will deliver:

1. A project plan for the maintenance of the rules and website.
2. Amendments for service and installation rules that can be read and interpreted by accredited service providers, electrical contractors, stakeholders and the general public. Publication will include posting on an appropriate website.
3. Regular progress reports to the Director General of DWE that summarise the tasks completed and in progress, the tasks planned for the coming period, and any delays that might have occurred.
4. Implementation schedule, including industry information dissemination and advice.

Timetable

It is expected that the maintenance will continue for the life of the Service and Installation Rules of NSW. The committee may use its discretion to project manage the time wisely, through the preparation of a project plan and timetable.

Current Membership

The SIRC consists of members nominated in accordance with the following procedures. The committee will nominate and agree on secretariat services for the SIRC and the chair will be nominated by the Director General. The group will be comprised of one representative from the following organisations:

Electricity Distributors

1. EnergyAustralia
2. Integral Energy
3. Country Energy
4. Rail Infrastructure Corporation (as required).

Regulators

1. Department of Water and Energy
2. Office of Fair Trading

Representative Groups and Specialist Membership

1. National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA).
2. Level 2 Service Provider Representative.
3. AREMA, IEEMA and CESA (as required).
4. IESMA and NEMSA (as required).
5. Generator Specialist (as required).

Future Changes of Membership

Each representative group will be asked to nominate one management representative with delegated authority to the Director General, DWE for endorsement.

Non –Executive and advisory members

IPART and AER will be asked to provide advisory members to the committee where appropriate.

Other interested parties may play an advisory role in the working group as required subject to Director General of DWE consent.

Meetings

The following meeting procedures will apply.

1. First meeting of the SIRC will occur no later than four months after the publication of the 2006 edition.
2. The Chair will be nominated by the Director General of DWE.
3. The Chair will develop a meeting agenda based on the proposed project plan or identified issues that require advice from the Committee. Any issues must be submitted in writing to the Chair.
4. The Secretary will be provided by DWE.
5. The Secretary will prepare minutes of meetings and distribute them to all members of the committee.
6. Convenorship, secretariat services and meeting procedures of any working group established by the SIRC will be included in the working group's terms of reference established by the committee.
7. The Chair will also, prepare or summarise advice (including minority views, if any) for the Director General of DWE.
8. Alternates may be nominated to attend a meeting and will assume the voting rights of the permanent member.
9. Alternates are not to become permanent members of the Committee unless approved by the Director General.
10. Sub-committees may be established to discuss technical issues or be utilised when reviewing a section which requires specific skills that the existing members do not hold.