

22 June 2023

Work and Electrical Safety Policy
Office of Industrial Relations
GPO Box 69
BRISBANE QLD 4001

By email: espolicy@oir.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REVIEW OF QUEENSLAND'S ELECTRICAL SAFETY ACT 2002

Energy Safe Victoria is Victoria's energy safety regulator, responsible for electricity, gas and pipeline safety in Victoria.

As an electricity safety regulator, we are interested in many of the issues explored in the discussion paper titled *A response to the Review of Queensland's Electrical Safety Act 2002 – key definitions and emerging technologies*. We are particularly interested in aspects of the discussion paper that relate to the future of operation of the Electrical Equipment Safety System (EESS).

Proposed changes to the EESS

As observed in the discussion paper, new electrical safety risks are emerging with the growth and rapid uptake of renewable energy technologies. While extra low voltage (ELV) equipment has historically been considered to have a low risk profile, we are seeing an increasing number of new and emerging technologies that are ELV equipment but have a higher risk profile.

For example, a simple desk lamp and an air conditioner with flammable refrigerant are classified as level 2 and level 3 in-scope equipment under the EESS. Whereas a domestic battery storage system with a greater risk profile is classified as level 1 in-scope electrical equipment or not in-scope electrical equipment depending on its voltage. As a result, none of the systems are required to be registered on the EESS database, although the responsible supplier of level 1 in-scope electrical equipment must be registered and the equipment must be marked with a regulatory compliance mark.

We recently wrote to the Standing Committee of Officials proposing that the definition of in-scope electrical equipment under the EESS be amended to consider total stored energy in addition to voltage. This would provide flexibility to enable these types of higher risk ELV equipment to be captured under the EESS. While the Victorian legislation gives us flexibility to include or exclude ELV equipment from being in-scope electrical equipment, changes via the EESS are preferred as it will result in consistency across participating jurisdictions.

Necessary amendments to Queensland's legislation

We understand that the definition of 'electrical equipment' in Queensland's *Electrical Safety Act 2002* would need to be amended to enable the proposed changes to the definition of in-scope electrical equipment via the EESS. The discussion paper proposes an option to expand the definitions of 'electrical equipment' and 'electrical installation' in the Act to:

- clearly incorporate new energy generation technologies (solar PV modules), energy generation systems and battery energy storage systems
- incorporate particular forms of ELV equipment within the definitions where there is a demonstrated risk.

We observe that this option would likely provide the required flexibility to enable the proposed changes via the EESS, which would ultimately lead to increased consumer safety and an enhanced national electrical equipment safety legislation. We note the other options outlined in the discussion paper would not achieve this outcome.

Further information

We would be happy to discuss any of the above in more detail.

Please contact [Redacted for publication] if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

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