

ELECTRICAL SAFETY ACT REVIEW 2002 PUBLIC SUBMISSION FROM MEND IT, AUSTRALIA [MIA]

30 July 2023

ATTENTION MR DICK WILLIAMS

[MIA is a repair legacy project](#) in retirement that raises awareness of the benefits and barriers to repair. The project's founders campaign for Right To Repair legislation.

MIA is not supportive of proposed legislation related to electrical vehicles that replaces qualified auto-electricians with licenced electricians. For details of why MIA has an against position, please refer to the [submission](#) by the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association. MIA was curious to find out what [ChatGPT](#) had to offer to the review in relation to this issue.

MIA supports the volunteer electrical repair work being undertaken by 3,000 Repair Cafes across the globe. Most of these pop-up repair events engage electrical repairers who are not licenced electricians or technicians.

MIA provided feedback to the [Draft Queensland E-product Action Plan 2023](#) and agrees that the Electrical Safety Act 2002 is out-of-step with the other states and the ACT [p.12].

“It appears Queensland’s approach to electrical repair of e-products is out of step when compared to its interstate counterparts. Mend It Australia contacted the relevant electrical regulators of each State and Territory to establish that ‘it is not illegal for a person, who is unlicensed, to repair low-voltage household appliances with a cord and plug in Victoria, Tasmania, Australian Capital Territory, West Australia, New South Wales and South Australia’. However, Mend It Australia confirmed that in Queensland it is ‘illegal to repair low-voltage electrical appliances with a cord and plug’, unless the individual is licensed accordingly.”

MIA lives in Victoria and [regularly repairs electrical appliances](#) at community repair events [repair cafes] and at home. A restricted electrical licence has been held in the past and MIA has the competency and skills. A licence for test and tag is held. MIA agrees that competency is essential and this is determined by self-evaluation that seriously considers relevant training and employment background.

MIA submitted Victorian accident and injury data related to DIY electrical repair of 230V appliances with a cord and a plug to Australia's 2021 Right To Repair Inquiry. This information was published in the [Productivity Commission's final report](#).

"In its submission, Mend It Australia included data obtained from the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) on injuries relating to home repairs of electrical items (sub. 101, pp. 7–9). According to its correspondence, MUARC found only 40 cases from 2015 to 2020 in Victoria, with most injuries to the wrist and hand (56 per cent), 28 per cent going to hospital, and none who died or were electrocuted. [pg.128]

Since 2015, MIA is yet to find evidence of electrical injury or death from electrocution from over 100 community-led repair groups across Australia.

FOR CONSIDERATION

Reassess the out-of-step legal requirement for [volunteer licenced electricians](#) to be present at community repair events in Queensland, if 230v electrical appliances with a cord and a plug are to be repaired. Why? Most licenced electricians are wiring houses during the week, and do not want to volunteer fixing lamps on the weekends.

Are monthly pop-up repair cafes run by informal volunteers a workplace under 'The Act'. If not, do competent volunteers, i.e retired electricians/appliance technicians fixing electrical items require a qualified electrician/licenced appliance technician to be in attendance overseeing them repair?

With the Repair Café movement growing in Queensland [refer [map](#)] and [the shortage of volunteer licenced electricians](#), MIA welcomes this review, not just for addressing new technologies, like electric vehicles and solar infrastructure but to help address the mountains of reusable and repairable e-products ending up in landfill.

Yours sincerely



Mend It, Australia