

Electrical Installation Condition Reports



Helping you to understand your responsibilities

Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) - the new name for fixed wiring inspection, why they are necessary and how they can benefit your business.

It's a near certainty that your business uses electrical power in some way. Therefore, to manage risks and comply with the law, your electrical installation is required to be inspected regularly. Meeting this requirement effectively, and ensuring that your business is not exposed, requires you to not only be familiar with the concept of EICR's, but to also be fully compliant. The insurance industry

acknowledge that the large majority of businesses that make a large loss insurance claim, never reopen for business, or close within 18 months. Added to the cost of business interruption, relocation, or fire damage, also the hidden cost of loss of reputation due to production failures, letting down customers and the bad publicity associated with an electrical accident or incident.

The law and responsibilities

Fundamentally, employers are required to assess the risks associated with their business and manage those risks at a tolerably low level. More specifically, employers are required to comply with applicable regulations; often a large number of them.

For EICR's, the specific regulations are the Electricity at Work Regulations, 1989 (EAWR).

Duty Holder requirements state that every site / location must have one. Overall responsibility lies with the company and / or Managing Director (MD). The MD can appoint a person to manage the electrical systems and pass on the responsibility of Duty Holder to someone such as a maintenance or production manager. It is also not possible to insure against breach of Duty Holder duties/responsibilities.

The Duty Holder must:

- Ensure that the electrical system is in a safe condition at all times
- Employ a competent person to maintain the electrical system in a safe condition
- Provide an effective maintenance program
- Ensure work on or near electrical systems is carried out safely
- Ensure equipment used for work on electrical systems is suitable for the task

The law says that all employers must safeguard the health and safety of all people affected by their undertaking and, in the UK, it is a criminal offence to fail in this duty of care. When serious failures of the management of health and safety result in a fatality, cases may be held accountable under The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 which came in to force 6th April 2008.

Electricity At Work Regulations 1989

- **The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 imposes duties on duty holders in respect of Electrical Systems, Equipment and Conductors.**
- **Records of maintenance and inspection should preferably be kept throughout the life of the system, without the records the Duty Holder cannot make a judgment on the condition of system and make any adjustments to the maintenance/inspection frequencies**

British Standard BS7671: 2008 (2011)

The requirements of this standard are not regulations in the legal sense. However they do give detailed best practice guidance and therefore any electrical system that meets the standards set out within BS7671 will automatically meet EAWR requirements.

Approaching Electrical Installation Condition Reports

The **IEE Guidance Note 3** document provides best practice on the subject and contains table 3.2 – (Maximum period between inspections) which gives a prescribed frequency regime based on your environment and risk of your business activity. In the majority of cases this will be 3 or 5 yearly unless classed as a special high risk location/activity.

Currently use a local contractor?

Regulations change fast, so although your trusted installation contractor may prove to be the best solution for your installation needs, inspection and certification requires up to date knowledge of current regulations that may be lacking if your primary function is electrical installation. Also additional competency levels City & Guilds 2391 / 2395 are required as a competency bench mark which they may not already possess.

Cowens Risk Solutions recommend the use of an independent inspection specialist to ensure true impartiality. In addition it is an effective way to assess the quality of your incumbent contractor.

We have established a discount for all of our existing clients through **The Compliance Solution QHSE Ltd** who are entirely independent of all activities that might affect the integrity of the inspection. Having no capability to perform maintenance, repairs and installation works, this prevents a conflict of interest arising regarding any potential defects that may be found during the inspection. They will also work with you and your contractor post inspection to offer best practice / cost effective solutions to any non compliance's (if found) free of charge.

Because their sole business is inspection of electrical installations, the process is professional and hassle free so you can get on with running your business knowing your obligations are being met in a cost effective way.

Not only are they NICEIC accredited, but due to their vast experience in this field, they have established best working practices and procedures designed to cope with all type's of business environments which results in very competitive costs.

Summary

If your premises has never completed an inspection before, don't worry we're here to help. Give us a call and we will get one of our specialists to discuss your options with you. For larger more complex sites, a free of charge (non disruptive) site survey may be required to assess your requirements.

- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 imposes duties on duty holders in respect of Electrical Systems, Equipment and Conductors.
- The Duty Holder has a lot of responsibility to ensure the Electrical system is in a safe condition and he must take all reasonable precautions to achieve this.
- Duty Holder must employ competent persons or companies to accomplish a task. C&G 2391/2395/NICEIC accredited.
- Duty Holder cannot discharge his duties as a Duty Holder
- Set maximum frequency of inspection as outlined within IEE GN3 document – typically 3 or 5 years.

The Final Word

Failure to inspect your electrical system and evidence that you are maintaining a safe distribution system;

- **can mean a substantial fine or even your imprisonment**, you could be exposed to a very real risk of prosecution under The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 , The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act.

- **can result in injury or death**, 1,000 people per year have an electrical accident of which about 25 are fatal.
- **can cause serious damage to or destroy your premises**, it is widely accepted that the second most common cause of workplace fires – after arson – is a neglected or misused electrical system.

For more information

Should you require any further guidance, please contact:

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