



NEWSLETTER CHRISTMAS 2019

Dear Contractor,

Welcome to the 2019 Christmas Newsletter!

The year now drawing to a close has seen continued growth in the Irish economy and with it an increase in construction activity and it's directly related amount of electrical work available to Contractors. It has, however, been a somewhat unevenly spread of increased work, with significant activity in Dublin, Cork and a few other urban areas, but that increased activity has yet to reach many rural areas.

The fact that no Electrical Apprentices were trained during the economic downturn, coupled with the fact that a whole generation of Electricians either emigrated or opted for the greater security of employment in factories or local authorities or left the trade entirely, has resulted in a situation where Electrical Contractors on major projects are having difficulty hiring and retaining sufficient qualified staff to meet the needs of the workload.

Many small rural based Electrical Contractors have in fact opted to sign up either as sub-contractors or direct employees of the main electrical contractors on big city-based sites. Indeed, in many parts of rural Ireland, it is now difficult to get an Electrical Contractor, not because of any surplus of work, but because the number of contractors operating in these areas has reduced significantly.

One would hope that the race to the bottom in pricing work, which prevailed during the boom years when there was plenty of work for everybody, will not be repeated again and that contractors will price work in a way which will ensure that they can operate in a viable and sustainable manner without having to work inordinate hours just to make ends meet.

Throughout the year ECSSA continued to provide support and advice to it's Members and hopefully will continue to provide that service in the years ahead. If ECSSA is to have a strong voice in the industry, it needs to represent a significant number of Contractors and therefore we would ask you to show your continued support by renewing your Membership for 2020.

We thank all those Contractors who have remained loyally with us throughout the years and to any of those whose membership fell away during the economic downturn, we extend a welcome back to the Association where you will be assured of the same high standard of service and support which Contractors have come to expect from ECSSA.

Finally, all at ECSSA would like to extend our Best Wishes to You & Yours for a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful & Prosperous New Year!

Mike Marshall

General Manager

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Technical Queries:
064 6637266

Contractors and Customers alike Frustrated by Certification Delays

One of the unwelcome, but not unexpected, consequences of the increased construction activity, which is becoming increasingly apparent in recent months, is the excessive delay experienced by Electrical Contractors in having Completion Certs processed through Safe Electric to ESB.

Contractors are bearing the brunt of Customers dissatisfaction and frustration when installations which are ready and certified are not being connected because the ESB have not yet received the Completion Cert from RECI/ Safe Electric.

Back at the time when the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) ignored the express wishes of the majority of respondents to a Public Consultation in 2014, and created a monopoly in the regulation of the industry and the processing of Certs, ECSSA predicted that the RECI systems, which up to then had been dealing with roughly 1,500 Contractors would eventually crack when required to deal with the additional 2,500 ECSSA Contractors who had been bulldozed against their wills into the new CER "Safe Electric" system.

We also predicted that the Electronic Certification system, which we regarded from the outset as flawed, unfit for purpose and incapable of being expanded to cater for 4,000 Electrical Contractors would be found to be inadequate and it appears that our predictions have proved accurate.

The present frustration is being felt by Contractors, their Customers, the ESB and in all probability by the hard pressed staff in RECI, who, whatever chance they might have in coping with the increased workload, are very likely further hampered by the continuation of the unreasonable demands of the CRU (formerly CER), whose demands for reports on all sorts of largely irrelevant data occupied quite a good deal of time in the ECSSA offices and probably intrude into the RECI working day in a similar manner.

One could never see the value of such statistics other than to provide work for a swarm of overpaid analysts in CER who beavered away producing reports, pie charts and predictions.

It is perhaps well to remember that the Electrical Contracting Industry operated in a safe and efficient manner without the need for all this analysis, reports and predictions for countless years prior to the creation of CRU/CER and all the time-consuming and costly regulation which it imposed on Electrical Contractors.

Is it not regrettable that despite all their data they could not predict that the model they were creating for the future regulation of the industry was open to failure and left the industry without any alternative structure to fall back on?

There is a very wise saying that "One should never fix that which is not broken".

The regime which existed prior to the advent of Safe Electric ensured that there was competition between two Regulatory Bodies, which curtailed the abuse of power by either and, in the case of ECSSA at least, it ensured that every Cert received on a given day was transmitted to ESB before three o'clock on the same day.

The blatant bias of the CER towards ECSSA may have temporarily triumphed, but at what cost to Contractors and Customers who are now suffering the consequences of an irrational decision by the same Body who broke up the ESB to create competition but actively removed the healthy competition which existed in the regulation of the electrical contracting sector.

There is no evidence to say that the Electrical Industry is any safer as a result but there is overwhelming evidence to show the frustration of all who are suffering the consequences of a system which cannot cope and which can only deteriorate further if the country starts to respond to the estimated need to build 30,000 houses each year for the next ten years.

2020 MEMBERSHIP - €100

- *Access to Technical Support
- *Your Voice is represented in the Industry
- *Reduced Fees for Courses

Tel No: 064 6637266

Email: info@ecssa.ie www.ecssa.ie

Emergency Lights - €60

Fire Alarm Certs - €60

Guide Verification & Certification - €20

Selection of Contract & Sub-Contract Forms

Calibration of Test Instruments - €113.50



Fifth Edition of the National Wiring Rules

The long awaited 5th Edition of the National Wiring Rules is expected to be launched in the first quarter of 2020 but obviously there will have to be a considerable lead in period before its requirements are enforced.

Despite much speculation as to what changes the new edition will bring about, one has to say at the outset that the basic rules of electrical work cannot change but that new requirements may be introduced in some areas.

These will probably include requirements or recommendations to cater for Electric Vehicle Charging, Arc Fault Detection Devices, greater use of RCBOs and possible changes to Distribution Board construction.

It really is pointless to speculate until the full detail of the contents is available but what is known is that the new Rule Book will run to over 700 pages, which is approximately double the size of the present 4th Edition.

Printing and production costs alone will ensure that the cost will rise accordingly and in this regard it is regrettable that NSAI, a statutory body funded by the taxpayer, contracts the printing and distribution of its publications to a UK based company at a time when there are several Irish based printing firms who have the capacity to handle a publication of this size without the need to send money out of the economy and out of the EU.

Quite apart from the lack of commitment to buying Irish and supporting Irish jobs, there seems to be little regard for the increased carbon footprint which the transport from the UK will entail.

Until such time as the new edition is available, Verification & Certification Training Courses will have to continue to reflect the requirements of the current 4th Edition, but as soon as the 5th Edition is launched, ECSSA will, in conjunction with Technological University Dublin (formerly Dublin Institute of Technology), incorporate such changes as impact on the Inspection, Verification and Certification of Electrical Installations.

We will also give consideration to producing a simple guide- book, setting out, in user friendly language, the changes called for in the 5th Edition and the practical implications of these changes in the day to day work of Electrical Contractors.

Verification & Certification Courses

The Schedule of V&C Training Courses for the first half of 2020 is set out elsewhere in this Newsletter.

While we normally provide the Courses in Dublin, Galway and Killarney, we have a facility to provide In-House Courses for firms who have suitable training facilities and who can guarantee a minimum number of participants to ensure the viability of putting on the Course.

The Course offered by ECSSA was originally Accredited by Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) but in recent times DIT has amalgamated with Tallaght Institute of Technology and Blanchardstown Institute of Technology to become Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin). This change has not impacted on the Course content or delivery, but the Level 7 Award given to successful participants will now come from a University established by law and as such will have greater international recognition.

Advances in the electrical sector, particularly in areas such as lighting, has meant that the course needs to be altered slightly to cater for the ever increasing use of LED lighting as opposed to ELV lighting supplied from conventional transformers but a major review of the course content at this stage would be premature, given that the advent of the 5th Edition of the National Wiring Rules will undoubtedly disclose areas which need to be incorporated in the Course going forward.

Just as in the case of Insurance Cover, there are no days of grace in the case of expired Qualified Certifier Numbers, with Certs being automatically rejected once the Expiry Date has passed.

Contractors should check the Expiry Date of their current QC Number and ensure that they book a Course in good time rather than wait until their expiry date has almost arrived, at which stage there might not be space available by any of the Course providers.

Even if you successfully complete the Course in advance of the expiry date of your current QC Number, you will not lose out, as on providing proof to RECI/Safe Electric of successful participation on an Accredited Course your QC Number will be extended for a further five years from the current expiry date, thereby ensuring a seamless transition and avoiding the frustration of having Certs returned until you complete a Course and notify RECI/Safe Electric of having done so.

Instrument
Calibration
€113.50
(incl. vat & carriage)



Spring 2020 Schedule of Verification & Certification Course

No.	Date	Day	Location	Venue
1	13 th & 14 th January 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
2	14 th & 15 th January 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
3	21 st & 22 nd January 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
4	27 th & 28 th January 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
5	28 th & 29 th January 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
6	10 th & 11 th February 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
7	10 th & 11 th February 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
8	11 th & 12 th February 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
9	17 th & 18 th February 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
10	24 th & 25 th February 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
11	24 th & 25 th February 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
12	25 th & 26 th February 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
13	2 nd & 3 rd March 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
14	9 th & 10 th March 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
15	10 th & 11 th March 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
16	23 rd & 24 th March 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
17	23 rd & 24 th March 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
18	24 th & 25 th March 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
19	6 th & 7 th April 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
20	6 th & 7 th April 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
21	7 th & 8 th April 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
22	20 th & 21 st April 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
23	20 th & 21 st April 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
24	21 st & 22 nd April 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
25	11 th & 12 th May 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
26	18 th & 19 th May 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
27	19 th & 20 th May 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
28	25 th & 26 th May 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
29	25 th & 26 th May 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
30	26 th & 27 th May 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
31	9 th & 10 th June 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
32	15 th & 16 th June 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
33	15 th & 16 th June 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel
34	16 th & 17 th June 2020	Tuesday & Wednesday	KILLARNEY	ECSSA
35	22 nd & 23 rd June 2020	Monday & Tuesday	DUBLIN	Moran Red Cow Hotel
36	22 nd & 23 rd June 2020	Monday & Tuesday	GALWAY	The Clayton Hotel

COST:

€425 (Non-Members) €400 (Members)

Please complete BOOKING FORM and return with
Copy of your ELECTRICAL QUALIFICATIONS & PAYMENT

