



### *In this Issue:*

- Deliveries by An Post
- Industrial Certs
- Change of Accounting System
- Stolen Property
- Inspector Changes
- 2007 Membership
- Pull Cord Switches
- ISME
- Insurance Reminder
- ESB Charges
- Thermal Imaging for the Electrical Industry

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9.00am - 1.00pm  
Closed for lunch  
2.00pm - 5.00pm

## *Chairman's Comments*

Welcome to the Autumn 2006 Edition of the ECSSA Newsletter!

The months ahead will see great change within the electrical contracting industry. The Electricity (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill which is currently going through the Dail, is expected to be passed into law in the Autumn. This will change the Regulation of the Electrical Industry, from it's present voluntary basis, to a statutory regime, as part of the law of the land. Enforcement and accountability will be rigidly audited and the scope for the control of shoddy workmanship will be significantly increased.

The operation of the Private Security Services Act, which came into force on the 1st of August, is already impacting on the ability of contractors to get involved in any aspect of intruder alarms installation without a license from the PSA. While it still remains to be properly clarified as to whether the installation of cables for an alarm system which may, or may not, be fitted later, constitutes the installation of an alarm system, nevertheless, most contractors are wary of getting involved, until they know exactly where they stand. Hopefully, representations to the PSA and the public representatives may lead to a situation where domestic installations are excluded from the scope of the Act as indeed they are from similar legislation in the UK. One way or another, there has to be proper definition of exactly what is covered.

The end of the year will see a major change in the way Completion Certs are processed. It was originally intended that from January 1st 2007, all Completion Certs would be returned directly to ECSSA, for onward transmission to ESB. The IT Systems are currently being put in place for this and it is likely that the commencement will be brought forward 2006 at least for majority of counties, to either November or December 1st.

We take the opportunity to welcome two new Inspectors to our ranks. Denis Crone, who has joined us as an additional Inspector in the Dublin Area, and Brendan O'Brien, who will take charge of the South East Region.



Chairman of ECSSA

# Notice to Members

## 1. Deliveries by An Post

We continue to have problems on an ongoing basis with items, and in particular books of Completion Certs, lost in the post. When it is established that a book of Certs has been lost, we are left with no option but to cancel these Certs, notify ESB, and re-issue replacements. In most cases, the original package eventually shows up, but we have had instances where the contractor has neglected either to return these Certs to us or even to inform us that they have been delivered to him. Some such Certs have eventually made their way back to ECSSA, having being used to get connections from ESB. ECSSA takes a very serious view of this abuse of Certs and, once Completion Certs are returned directly to ECSSA, any such Cert will be detected before it ever gets to ESB. This will result not only in delay in obtaining a connection, but the contractor using a Cert which has been cancelled will be subject to disciplinary action.

While it is helpful if we are informed as soon as it is apparent that Certs are delayed in the post, we should point out that it is not unusual for An Post to take up to five days to deliver a package.

Subject to insurance and membership being in order, all Orders are processed and send out on the same day, if received before 2pm. It is therefore unrealistic to phone the Office at 4pm and expect that your Certs will be delivered the following day! Most contractors are well aware of when they are likely to need Certs, and there is little excuse for ordering at the last minute and incurring the additional costs of Couriers, Swift Post, etc.

Once again, we would ask that you order your requirements in good time and avoid any last minute hassle or delay.

## Wire-Free Radio Fire Detection



**5000 FirePoint** is an analogue addressable fire detection system with a range of fully featured controllers from 4-zone to 96-zone with radio based networking and paging.

The Wire-Free environment eliminates expensive fire-rated cable and all faults and false alarms associated with wired systems.



**Fire sensors** can be installed in less than 10 mins and are based on industry standard devices, they have no visible aerials and aesthetically pleasing low profile designs. Each sensor has an integral energy pack that has a typical, field-proven life of 5 years. Sensors include optical smoke, heat and multisensor - combining both smoke and heat.



**VoicePoint** is the award winning combined wire-free fire sensor/voice evacuation sounder that provides the ideal solution for applications such as hotels and hospitals where a fire detector and sounder are required in every room.

**5000 FirePoint** is supported with a range of wire-free ancillaries. As with the fire sensors all ancillaries can be quickly and simply installed without damaging the fabric of the building or disrupting business operation.



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Mobile: 087-7971898  
E-mail: [sales@visionsecurity.ie](mailto:sales@visionsecurity.ie)  
[www.visionradiofire.com](http://www.visionradiofire.com)







## 2. Industrial Certs

One of the questions most frequently asked by contractors relates to whether an Industrial Cert is required for all commercial installations. The simple answer is that, irrespective of whether the job is domestic, commercial, or industrial, if the load is such that it can be handled by Whole Current metering, then the normal Domestic Cert will suffice.

Whole Current metering, in both single phase and 3 Phase, is normally limited to 80amps per phase. Any load in excess of this requires Current Transformer (CT) Metering and will need to be certified with an Industrial Cert.

## 3. Change of Accounting System

At the end of 2006, ECSSA will move from the present Accounting System to a more advanced package. Growth in membership and turnover has made this move inevitable.

To reduce, in as far as possible the amount of balances which have to be transferred to the new system, we would ask all members either to use up any Credit Balance on their Account, or to clear off any small Amounts owed. Statements have already been issued to those contractors who have either a debit or credit balance and there has been a good response, for which we are thankful, but we would ask those members who may have neglected to deal with the matter, to do so as soon as possible.

Any unused Credit remaining at the year end will be automatically transferred to Irish Electrical Benevolent Association (IEBA Fund).

## 4. Stolen Property

There has been a marked increase of reports of plant and equipment being stolen from vehicles and from building sites. There has also been an increase in the instances of similar equipment being offered to contractors at knockdown prices. The fact

that many sites were closed during the traditional builders holidays, at the start of August, created a field day for thieves who targeted equipment left on site and not properly secured during the shut down period. Any contractor who is offered equipment in suspicious circumstances should refuse to have anything to do with it, and, if they have reason to believe it may be stolen, they should pass on the information to the Gardai. The loss may not be yours on this occasion, but it could well be in the future, and it would be reassuring to think that the actions of some fellow contractor might help you to recover your property if you suffer the misfortune of a theft.

## 5. Inspector Changes

The Dublin Regional Inspector, Brian Moran, plans to retire at the end of 2006, having served the Company almost from its foundation. Brian will continue to represent ECSSA at the ETCI and various other meetings for some time into the future.

It has been obvious for some time that the growth in membership in Dublin is such that it has become virtually impossible for one Inspector to deal with the area. Accordingly, we have employed an additional Inspector, who joined Brian on August 21st and is now working in the Dublin Area. The new Inspector, Denis Crone, has recently retired from ESB, where he has held a variety of positions throughout his career. We look forward to having him with us for many years to come.

We have recruited another ex ESB employee to cover the South East Region. Brendan O'Brien, originally from Tralee, now lives in Greystones, Co. Wicklow, and will operate along with Jimmy Batten until the end of 2006, when he will take over the South Eastern Region from Jimmy, who lives in Dublin, and who will then replace the retiring Brian Moran as one of the two Inspectors assigned to the Dublin Area. The current regional boundaries are constantly under review and there are a number of

## Fireco

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Dorgard X incorporates the latest radio technology making it suitable even for noisy environments.

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The Dorgard Transmitter (TX) unit is positioned next to the fire alarm bell or sounder (see above left). Should the fire alarm be activated the Dorgard Transmitter (TX) will signal to all the Dorgard Receiver (RX) units to release, closing the fire doors and preventing the spread of fire and smoke.

One Dorgard Transmitter (TX) can be used to control any number of Dorgard Receivers (RX) within a 30 metre range.



counties, or sections of counties which may have to be reallocated to a different Inspector in order to keep the number of contractors with whom each Inspector has to deal within manageable levels.

## 6. 2007 Membership

Regrettably, it looks as if, after a period where no increase in membership fees has occurred since 2003, rising costs means that there will have to be an increase in both first time Applications and Renewals for 2007.

At this point in time, we have not finally decided on what the amount of these increases will be, but every effort is being made to ensure that the impact is kept to the minimum, especially since we expect that ETCI will impose a significant cost increase for Certs on January 1st.

One area of possible reduction is that we will be pressing Insurance Companies to pass on to contractors the obvious reduction in costs which stem from a lower level of claims in the industry.

Recent figures released have indicated

enormous profits for the insurance industry. While we accept that substantial reductions in insurance costs have been achieved over the past few years, we must never let the insurers forget that there is always room for improvement and we will constantly strive for even lower premiums. The entry of two new insurance companies to the market will mean that the onus is on the existing insurers to be even more competitive than in the past and all this has to be good for the consumer.

## 7. Pull Cord Switches

Contractors right around the country have recently been reporting problems with pull cord ceiling switches controlling electric showers. A number of contractors have sent the badly burned remains of these switches to ECSSA. These have been brought to the attention of the ETCI by our Dublin Inspector, Brian Moran. It would appear that no one manufacturer's products are particularly vulnerable, and the problem would seem to lie in the fact that the wattage of instant showers has gradually



crept upwards over the past few years. Some of these showers are now rated at 9.5kw, which is coming dangerously close to the nominal current carrying capacity of most ceiling switches. In practical terms many of these showers are used early in the morning, when there can also be considerable additional load such as cookers, toasters, kettles and heaters, on the household supply. If the voltage dips, the resultant rise in current could well be the straw that breaks the camels back and causes overheating in the switch. Once initial overheating occurs, the condition of the contacts deteriorate, building up a higher resistance and leading to even greater heating during subsequent use of the switch. Some of the examples we have seen must have been very close to causing a fire and, indeed, we are aware of one instance where an adjacent ceiling joist was severely scorched. The ideal answer would be to use double pole wall mounted switches, which do not appear to be as vulnerable as the ceiling switches. Where the wall switch cannot be used, contractors should be particularly careful in regard to the location of the pull cord switch and should, perhaps, take the opportunity to recheck any switches which have been fitted in recent times to control high wattage showers. We await the comments of ETCI and will circulate same when they become available.

## 8. ISME

ECSSA has always tried to be helpful to it's members in every possible way. However, it has to be realised that it's primary function is that of a Regulatory Body and that it is specifically precluded from acting as a Trade Union or representative group on behalf of the commercial interests of contractors.

There is no doubt however, but that contractors need to be protected from many of the unacceptable obstructions being placed in the way of running a successful

business, such as the activities of EPACE and the problems caused by the draconian scope of the new Private Security Services Act, to mention but a few.

We have looked at the various business organisations to which a contractor can become affiliated and it is quite obvious to us that Irish Small & Medium Enterprises Association Ltd (ISME) are in a league apart from all other Associations when it comes to protecting the interests of it's members and successfully lobbying on their behalf. We believe that contractors need such an independent Association at present and will have even greater need in the years ahead. ISME have offered a 33.3% reduction in Membership Fees to ECSSA Members who wish to become members of ISME. Contractors who join should note that ISME membership runs for a full year from the date of joining.

We believe that it is in the interest of every contractor to be part of an organisation which has the clout, and the right, to protect their vital interests at every level of business, Government and society.

## 9. Insurance Reminder

Can we for the umpteenth time stress the importance of ensuring that ECSSA have confirmation of renewal of insurance cover immediately on expiry of a contractor's existing policy. Contractors whose names appear on the ECSSA website are being advertised by ECSSA in the public domain. Their appearance on the website is a guarantee to the public that the contractor concerned has met the necessary technical standards and, equally importantly, that his work is covered by Public Liability Insurance.

ECSSA cannot mislead the public by falsely advertising as being insured, a contractor whose cover has lapsed. A claim by a customer against a contractor with such lapsed insurance would almost certainly fall to be paid by ECSSA, on the grounds that the customer could claim to have chosen





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that particular contractor on foot of the ECSSA guarantee that insurance was in place. Therefore, our database is arranged in such a way that, on the expiry date of a contractors insurance, his name is automatically omitted from the list which is used for the next update and will not appear on the website, unless notice of renewal has been received before the update is carried out. Contractors should therefore emphasise to their insurers the importance of either sending a Insurance Cert, or a letter of confirmation of renewal, to ECSSA immediately that cover has recommenced. We already receive daily lists of policies renewed or incepted from one insurer (AON / Eagle Star) and the CER have promised to ask the other insurers to adapt a similar policy.

## ESB Charges

Contractors should be aware that many of those services previously available free of charge from ESB are now subject to charge. This has been largely brought about by the fact that under the new regime for the Regulation of the Electrical Industry in

Ireland, ESB Networks are obliged to recoup a portion of their outlay on all services provided to Customers.

Contractors should be aware of these charges before quoting for jobs as, in many instances, the customer will expect to have the installation completed and connected within the price quoted and the contractor may well find himself having to foot the cost of the new ESB charges before supply can be connected.

Typical of such charges are, the Installation of an additional meter and time switch for night storage heating which will now cost €166, and the fitting of new tails for consumer distribution board. This was previously available free of charge, but from now on, will cost €140.

A full list of these charges are available on the ESB Networks website.



## Thermal Imaging for the Electrical Industry

In today's modern industry, where any interruption or shut down to electrical supply can be both costly and damaging to a company's reputation, a technology that would help predict and prevent this occurrence would be very useful.

Well, such a technology does exist and is being used daily by some of the biggest companies in Ireland. What is this super technology? It's known as thermography!

Thermography is performed by trained thermographers, using Thermal Imaging cameras, which operate in the Infrared part of the electromagnetic spectrum and can turn the invisible infrared energy into a visible energy form which we can understand. Although initially developed by the military, the cost of cameras has fallen significantly over the last few years, and now there is a proliferation of low cost imagers available on the market.

The traditional commercial application for thermography has been the electrical preventative maintenance market. The first indication of an electrical fault (apart from a complete failure) is a rise in temperature. If a Preventative Maintenance program is in place these types of electrical problems should be detected long before the fault becomes severe enough to cause a failure, or indeed a fire.

For people interested in entering this market there are numerous cameras available for sale in Ireland. However, it is not as simple as just buying a camera and offering the service. It is important to have proper training to be able to extract the relevant information from any given thermogram (thermal picture).

Again there are a number of companies offering certified training in Ireland. For further information, on this please contact the secretary of the IRLTA (Irish Thermography Association) [stephen@rfe.ie](mailto:stephen@rfe.ie)

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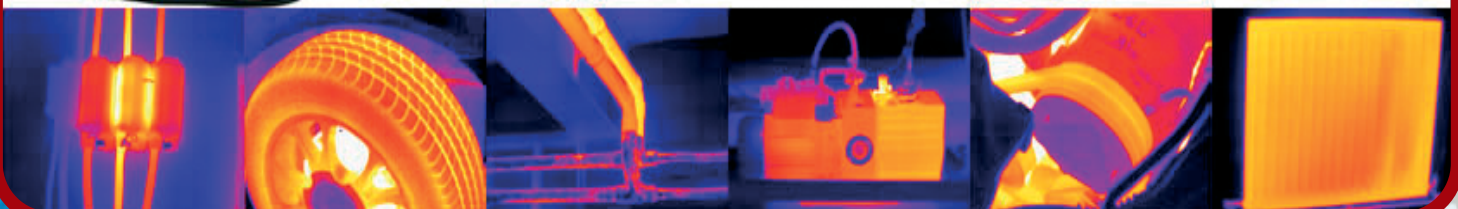
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# 2006/2007 Certification & Verification Courses

No:	Day	Date	Location	Venue
1	Friday	20th October '06	Dublin	Red Cow Morans Hotel
2	Friday	20th October '06	Galway	Quality Hotel, Oranmore
3	Saturday	21st October '06	Dublin	Red Cow Morans Hotel
4	Saturday	21st October '06	Limerick	The Woodlands, Adare
5	Wednesday	01st November '06	Cork	The Doughcloyne
6	Thursday	2nd November '06	Kerry	ECSSA Training Centre
7	Friday	3rd November '06	Omagh	Mellon Country Hotel
8	Saturday	4th November '06	Navan	The Ardboyne Hotel
9	Friday	17th November '06	Waterford	Ramada Viking Hotel
10	Friday	17th November '06	Dublin	The Sheldon Park Hotel
11	Saturday	18th November '06	Waterford	Ramada Viking Hotel
12	Saturday	18th November '06	Dublin	The Sheldon Park Hotel
13	Friday	1st December '06	Athlone	The Creggan Court Hotel
14	Friday	1st December '06	Ennis	West County Hotel, Ennis
15	Saturday	2nd December '06	Dublin	Red Cow Morans Hotel
16	Saturday	2nd December '06	Limerick	The Woodlands Hotel, Adare
17	Friday	12th January '07	Cork	The Doughcloyne Hotel
18	Friday	12th January '07	Sligo	The Sligo Park Hotel
19	Saturday	13th January '07	Kerry	ECSSA Training Centre
20	Saturday	13th January '07	Longford	The Longford Arms Hotel
21	Friday	26th January '07	Portlaois	The Comfort Inn Hotel
22	Friday	26th January '07	Dundalk	The Fairways Hotel
23	Saturday	27th January '07	Cahir	Cahir House Hotel
24	Saturday	27th January '07	Dublin	Red Cow Morans Hotel
25	Friday	9th February '07	Galway	The Quality Hotel Oranmore
26	Friday	9th February '07	Kilkenny	The New Park Hotel
27	Saturday	10th February '07	Limerick	The Woodlands Hotel, Adare
28	Saturday	10th February '07	Kildare	The Glenroyal Hotel
29	Friday	23rd February '07	Navan	The Ardboyne Hotel
30	Friday	23rd February '07	Cork	The Doughcloyne Hotel
31	Saturday	24th February '07	Dublin	The Red Cow Morans Hotel
32	Saturday	24th February '07	Kerry	ECSSA Training Centre

**Friday / Wednesday**

**7pm to 10pm (Break mid way)**

**Saturday**

**12noon to 3pm (Break mid way)**

**To book your place on any course contact Cathy @ 064-37266 Cost €120 per session**