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John O'Loughlin Chairman ECSSA (third from left) making a presentation to Jimmy Leahy Tralee on the occasion of his retirement from ECSSA with (left) Michael Marshall Technical Manager and Wally Forde Chief Inspector ECSSA at The Brehon, Killarney.  
Photo by Michelle Cooper Galvin



## Remaining 2005/2006 Certification and Verification Courses

Course Number	For Contractors in	Town	Dates	Hotel
7	Dublin	Dublin City	Fri 13/01/2006	Sheldon Park Hotel 01-4601055
8	Laois/ Offaly	Portlaoise	Sat 14/01/2006	Montague Hotel 0502-26154
9	Tipperary	Thurles	Fri 27/01/2006	Hayes Hotel 0504-22122
10	Limerick	Limerick City	Sat 28/01/2005	Kilmurray Lodge 061-331133
11	Wicklow	Arklow	Fri 10/02/2006	Arklow Bay Hotel 0402-32309
12	Wexford / Waterford	New Ross	Sat 11/02/2006	Brandon House Hotel 051-421703
13	Dublin	Dublin City	Fri 24/02/2006	Sheldon Park Hotel 01-4601055
14	Carlow / Kilkenny	Kilkenny	Sat 25/02/2006	River Court Hotel 056-7723389
15	Cavan/ Monaghan	Cootehill	Fri 10/03/2006	White Horse Inn 049-5552222
16	Roscommon/Westmeath/Longford	Athlone	Sat 11/03/2006	Creggan Court Hotel 090-6477777
17	Donegal	Letterkenny	Fri 24/03/2006	Clanree 074-9124369
18	Leitrim/ Sligo	Sligo	Sat 25/03/2006	Sligo Park 071-9160291
19	Cork	Cork City	Fri 07/04/2006	Doughcloyne Hotel 021 4312535
20	Kerry	Killarney	Sat 08/04/2006	ECSSA Training Centre 064-37266
21	Louth/ Meath	Navan	Fri 21/04/2006	Ardboyne Hotel 0406-9023119
22	Dublin	Dublin City	Sat 22/04/2006	Sheldon Park Hotel 01-4601055

# ECSSA news

December, 2004



## Seasons Greetings!

Welcome to the Christmas 2005 Edition of the ECSSA Newsletter!

As 2005 draws to a close, we can look back with pride at our most successful year since the foundation of ECSSA.

Both have had long careers with ESB Networks and their experience will be a considerable addition to the ranks of our inspectorate.

Membership now approaches 2,500, we continue to receive new applications virtually every day and it is obvious that more and more contractors now realise that the ECSSA slogan of 'protecting the Customer and the Contractor' is more than empty words.

Wally Forde takes over from Jimmy Leahy as Chief Inspector. Wally has been our Western Regional Inspector for several years and was the unanimous choice of all his colleagues when they were asked to decide which of them should become Chief Inspector on Jimmy's retirement.

Highlights during the year included the opening of our extended offices and lecture room at Coolmore House, the ongoing success of our Insurance Affinity Scheme, and the launch of our revised Certification & Verification Course.

Contractors who have dealt with Wally over the years are loud in their praise of his courtesy, attention to detail and helpfulness. We look forward to working with him for many years ahead!

December sees the retirement of our Chief Inspector, Jimmy Leahy, who has been with the Company since its foundation. On behalf of the Board and all ECSSA Members, I would like to thank Jimmy for his enormous work for ECSSA and to wish him a long and happy retirement.

I want to thank my fellow Directors and our dedicated Staff for their efforts throughout the year.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to wish all our Members, their Families and Employees, a happy and peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year in 2006.

We welcome two new Inspectors, Paul Keane, who will be assigned to Cork City and County, and Michael Guerin, who will look after the Kerry Members and will also present our Training Courses.

*John O' Loughlin*  
Chairman of ECSSA

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Chairman's Comments

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## Notice to Members

### 1. Membership Renewal

2006 Membership falls due on January 1st and invoices are included with this Newsletter.

2006 membership cheques should be post dated until after December 31st 2005.

Please do not send Orders with your Membership Renewal, as Sales and Membership are handled by two different sections of the Office and including both in one cheque will slow up both the processing the of the Membership and of the Orders.

The 2006 Diary & Yearbook will be distributed with Membership Renewal.

### 2. Membership of AECl

There seems to be a misguided impression among Contractors that members of ECSSA cannot be members of AECl. There is no truth or foundation to this suggestion. It is no business of ECSSA whether, or not, a Contractor is, or wants to become, a member of AECl and there is no bar on current members of AECl joining ECSSA.

### 3. Certification & Verification Courses

There is an obligation on new members to attend a Certification & Verification Course in their own area at the first available opportunity. A number of new members appear to be under the impression that they have two or three years during which they can fulfil this requirement.

It is the clear intention of the CER that Contractors should be evaluated and if necessary instructed on the correct procedures for testing and verification at the earliest opportunity following their registration as contractors.

Contractors who have not already attended such a Course should arrange to attend at a suitable venue at the next available opportunity. A full list of the remaining Certification & Verification Courses appears in this Newsletter.

It is vital that before attending a Course, that each Contractor should check the operation of his own instruments and should ensure that the batteries are good and that all leads are in good condition.

The Inspectors have reported far too many cases of

Contractors who, quite obviously, have not been testing their installations, as some do not even appear to be able to switch on the instruments, while others arrive with instruments that have flat batteries, no batteries, or missing leads.

### 4. Reminder

There are still some members, particularly from the earlier years, who have not provided photos for their identity cards. We appeal to all such members to forward two recent passport photos with your Membership Renewal for 2006. It will not be possible to issue cards without photos from the 01/01/2006.

### 5. EPACE

Considerable time is being spent each day by the ECSSA Staff answering questions from upset Contractors who feel that they are being harassed by EPACE.

EPACE have already been told by ECSSA that, irrespective of the merits of what they are trying to achieve, their aggressive approach and their attempts to give the impression that they have statutory powers, is totally unacceptable.

The fact remains that EPACE is a private limited company, with no statutory powers whatsoever and, as such, have no authority to demand information from any contractor or to oblige a contractor to produce records, payslips, or other documents.

We have now instructed our Solicitors to write to EPACE and point out that if they do not cease and desist from these activities, in relation to ECSSA Members, we will seek an Injunction on behalf of our Members to restrain EPACE from continuing this harassment.

### 6. Public Authority Tenders

It was brought to our notice that Dublin City Council were insisting that rewiring grants would only be paid on foot of installations certified by a RECl member.

We immediately took issue with Dublin City Council, who have now apologised and are altering their website, all their documentation, and instructing their staff that it has to be made clear to Grant Applicants that a Cert issued by ECSSA or RECl is acceptable for grant purposes.

We have also written to Donegal County Council in relation to a similar issue, but have not, as yet, received assurances that the practice will be discontinued. We now intend to pass this complaint to the Competitions Authority.

We also intend to write to the Department of the Environment to ensure that an instruction is issued from the DOE to all Local Authorities that tender documents must not confine qualification to tender to members of RECl. Since ECSSA has been around for eight years, and now represents more than 50% of Electrical Contractors in the entire country, we feel that there is no excuse for this ongoing, even if unintentional, discrimination on behalf of Local Authorities, and we will take whatever steps it requires to ensure that the practice is ended.

If any Contractor is aware of any such anti competitive requirement from any Local Authority or Public Body, he should forward details to the ECSSA Office.

### 7. ESB Pilot Scheme

Agreement has now been reached with ESB Networks regarding payment for the operation of the Pilot Scheme for counties Kerry and Wexford.

Accordingly, from January 1st 2006, Contractors in both those areas will once again send their certs to ECSSA for verification and onward transmission to ESB.

ESB expect to have their IT Systems modified to suit nationwide implementation of such a scheme by July 1st 2006 but will not roll out the full nationwide

implementation until January 1st 2007.

For the second half of 2006, the new system will be tested using certs sent in by Kerry and Wexford members. These contractors will not be aware of any change from the procedure which will apply from January to July 2006. If testing of the system, between July and December 2006 is successful, the system will be expanded to the entire country from January 1st 2007.

The success of this whole system will depend on each cert having the proper MPRN inserted. We have emphasised to ESB Networks that all their documentation must highlight the MPRN as the number to be included on all Completion Certs and, ESB must also ensure that confusion is not caused by the issue of any other numbers which might be mistaken for MPRN numbers.

At present, all ESB MPRN numbers consist of an eleven digit number beginning with 1.

### 8. New ECSSA Inspectors

From January 1st 2006, counties Cork and Kerry will no longer form a single region. From that date, Cork City and County will be under the jurisdiction of Inspector, Paul Keane, (087)1221235, while Michael Guerin (087) 1221234 takes over as Inspector for the Kerry region.

## 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.

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## Industry News

### Grasslin Timers

We have received correspondence from Kelliher's Electrical to the effect that any members who have problems with Grasslin QE7 Timers should contact their local Branch Manager of Kelliher's, CT Electric or Fitzpatrick's who will issue replacement Timers.

### Meter Cabinet Protection Frames

Some Local Authorities now require that outdoor meter cabinets, in isolated installations such as booster pump houses, be fitted with a vandal proof protection frame. At the moment no wholesaler appears to have these in stock, but we have been able to source them in the UK and have a number in stock, should any member require same. The cost is €145 including VAT & Carriage. Contractors who need these on a regular basis should ask their local wholesalers to consider taking them in to stock.

### ETCI Rules Amendment

Amendment No 2 of the National Rules for Electrical Installations have been issued by ETCI, with effect from September 1st 2005. There are some important changes and additions in this document, so it is vital that every member has a copy. ETCI Amendment No 2 is available from ECSSA at a cost of €8 Contractors purchasing the main current Third Edition book receive the second Amendment free of charge.

### EA Site Audits

It has been brought to our attention that Inspectors employed by EA Technology have been visiting sites unannounced and carrying out inspections on behalf of CER. It would appear that the method of selecting sites for audits is to select, at random, ten certs which have been sent to a local ESB Office, but which have not yet been connected. Five of these are supposed to be ECSSA Members, with the other five from RECl.

Apparently in a number of instances involving contractors from both Regulatory Bodies, the Inspectors found that the kitchen sinks were not in place and therefore could not be bonded or earthed. Based on this, they have asked that the Certs be withdrawn.

This appears to be a ridiculous interpretation of the Regulations and displays a frightening lack of awareness of the practical realities of house building. In most cases, supply is connected and the heating turned on to dry out the house long before any kitchen units or kitchen sink is fitted.

One has to ask what danger is posed by a kitchen sink when the kitchen sink is not present in the first place, particularly when an earth cable is available at the sink location for connection, once the kitchen and sink are fitted.

The matter has been discussed at a meeting of ECSSA Inspectors and has also been raised at the Board of ECSSA and it has been agreed that the issue would be taken up immediately with both ESB and ETCI as the above interpretation of the Rules is totally unrealistic and unenforceable.

### Switch and Socket Box Extensions

Problems have arisen recently where walls have been re-lined with cladding and sometimes have up to 50mm of insulation fitted. This has meant that there is an open space between the back of the socket or switch and the box mounted on the wall. This situation is contrary to ETCI Regulations.

To overcome the problem, it is necessary to fit an extension collar on the box to bring it to the finished surface level. At least one manufacturer (Appleby) have produced such extension collars in one and two gang versions, ranging in depth from 16 to 35mm. These are currently in stock in branches of Kelliher's Electrical and may possibly be available from other Wholesalers as well.