

Voltimum website packed with information for electricians

New in Ireland is www.voltimum.ie a web portal for the Irish electrical industry. This is the eighth portal of its kind in Europe: Voltimum sites have been operating successfully in Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK for several years and are regularly used by over a quarter of a million people involved in the electrical industry. Voltimum's mission in Ireland is the same as in all other European countries: to become the central reference point for information and technical support relating to the installation of electrical equipment.

"We want Voltimum to be the electrical industry's first port of call for information. Users will find lots of useful information on the site itself with further links to partners' sites where they can find even more", said Margaret Fitzsimons,

Managing Director of Voltimum UK & Ireland. "When we launch the site in Ireland it will have significant databases of technical product information to browse through but, more importantly, it will never stop growing as we are constantly updating it with breaking news, technical articles and product updates."

As a member of ECSSA, you can enjoy FREE access to this market-leading portal, making the most of its many functions to aid working practices and procedures. This includes:

- A growing product encyclopaedia of more than 20,000 products.

- Free online Technical Advice. You can get answers to those tricky technical questions online from some of Ireland's leading experts.

- Details of Training and CPD courses to help you keep informed and progress your career.

- You can also keep up to date with all that is happening in the industry with Voltimum's award-winning newsletters. ECSSA is a supporter of Voltimum and will be publishing news and information on the Voltimum site so we recommend that you take time to visit www.voltimum.ie and register for free.

REMINDER

Orders, Cheques, etc., should not be included with Completion Certs submitted to ECSSA for onward transmission to ESB, as Orders and Certs are processed in separate Departments of the Office and mixing will lead to undue delay.

Switch to the best bathroom heat, light & vent unit.



The IXL Easy Duct Smart Switch Tastic® is a revolution in bathroom heating and ventilation, offering incredible cost savings in energy use and maintenance.

This complete 3-in-1 bathroom solution provides direct instant heat, air extraction and light, at the touch of a button. The IXL Tastic® vents steam and odours outside of the home via a specially designed in-line side-mounted ducting system and instantly warms the bathroom by using infra-red technology.

The side mounted ducting reduces installation clearance to 230mm allowing for more flexible applications in flat roofed or multi-level homes. All genuine IXL Tastics feature built-in separate safety devices making them the smartest choice

With a comprehensive range of Tastics available, there is a model to suit every customer. Contact us at Prismatics and let us show you how IXL Tastics can help grow your bottom line.

Independent tests prove that IXL Tastics Easy Duct have class leading exhaust performance*.



IXL Easy Duct Tastics feature self sealing flaps preventing draughts and heat loss. IXL's fully tested infra-red heat lamps deliver highly efficient heating to keep you warm.



Triumph Easy Duct Smart Switch

Sensation Easy Duct Smart Switch

Silhouette Easy Duct Smart Switch

*As per Independent Tests February 2005. Based on 150mm ducting, 6 metres in length, installed per instructions.



PRISMATICS

5 Kinsale Commercial Park, Kinsale, Co. Cork, Ireland
Phone: 021 4773157, Fax: 021 4773255
Email: sales@prismatics.net www.prismatics.net



Aon Insurance
Affinity Services

ECSSA – EXCLUSIVE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The ECSSA Affinity Scheme was set up in 2004 to offer a real alternative to members of the ECSSA. In setting up the scheme there were approaches made to a number of Insurers, and insurers were selected based on their ability to perform on a number of key headings

SUSTAINABLE PRICE SAVINGS

Although we all like to think that the other benefits are important, price remains the biggest detriment for most people in choosing an insurer. In setting price insurers were charged with the task of offering real value

1. The price must be cheaper than the alternatives
2. We would not compromise on cover or service to deliver this price
3. That the price savings must be sustainable

COVER

The Main product is a standard liability cover, which has been customised to provide for the specific requirements of ECSSA members. It includes such features as

1. Public/ Products Liability Limit of Indemnity - €6,500,000
2. Employers Liability Limit €15,000,000
3. No Height limits
4. Burning and welding cover – up to €1,300,000

In addition the cover has been extended to provide a few very beneficial extensions that extend the cover well beyond the market norm.

- ❑ **EFFICACY**
This provides cover in the event of an installation failing to perform its intended function. This is an extremely important cover particularly where installations include alarms or security systems
Cover is provided here for a limit of - €2,000,000

- ❑ **FINANCIAL LOSS**
Generally insurance cover only operates where there is a physical injury or damage. There are situations (such as a power outage), which may result in no physical damage, but yet result in a serious loss of revenues for a Third Party.
Cover is provided here for a Limit of €100,000

- ❑ **CONTRACTUAL LIABILITY**
Liability assumed under contract can prove very onerous, particularly in the light of exposures under G.D.L.A. and R.I.A.I. contracts and Contracts with E.S.B.
The policy extends to include liability assumed under such agree

- ❑ **PERSONAL ACCIDENT BENEFIT**
The basic policy provides A limited from of Personal Accident cover of €16,000 capital benefits.

- ❑ **LEGAL EXPENSE**
The Legal Expenses provides a whole range of Additional Benefits as follows

- Free Legal Advice helpline – 24 hour per day
- Access to On line Employee Manual
- Legal expenses cover for defence costs for
 - i. Employment Disputes
 - ii. Revenues Commissioner Audits
 - iii. Health and Safety Offences
 - iv. Anti Competitive practices
 - v. Contract Disputes

SERVICE

Our dedicated affinity has been set up to provide a centre of excellence for management of our affinity business throughout Ireland. The aim of the unit is to provide a superior service to our clients by through the

1. Dedicated trained staff on hand to assist with your insurance requirements.
2. Automated Systems to ensure the efficient issue of documentation to clients.
3. Efficient Claims Handling and review / analysis of claims

OTHER COVERS

In addition to the Main Covers, we offer a whole range of additional covers and services, and can deal with all of your insurance and Risk Management requirements

In particular, Goods in Transit and Personal Accident Covers are proving very popular among members

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

We are currently working with the ECSSA to develop a dedicated website providing advice on a whole range of pensions investment and protection products, which we hope to launch over the coming months

THANK YOU

The success of the scheme has been as a result of the expertise of Aon coupled with the huge support of The ECSSA members. We can only ensure the continued support and sustainability of pricing through this continued support.

While there are always going to be alternative options available to members, there none that are offering the same value for money and sustainability of price, service and cover

We would like to thank you all for your continued support

Dave Watkin
Director Affinity

ECSSA – EXCLUSIVE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Contacts

ECSSA Unit
Aon Insurance
Harbour Street
Mullingar

Free Phone - 1800 – 201 062
Fax - 044 93 - 34404
www.aon.ie



Aon Insurance
Affinity Services

MacDonagh Boland Crotty MacRedmond Limited t/a Aon Beech Hill
Pension Trustees Ltd Aon Consulting is regulated by the Irish Financial
Services Regulatory Authority as an Authorised Advisor



Ecssa news

Spring, 2007

Important Notice To All Members

Return of Completion Certs to ECSSA

For over two and a half years, electrical contractors in Counties Kerry and Wexford have been returning their Completion Certs to their Regulatory Body rather than their local ESB office when seeking a connection on behalf of a customer. This Scheme has been fine tuned over that period and is now operating very efficiently.

The Scheme will be extended to all other counties from April 1st 2007.

Contractors will find that in practice, this is a far more efficient and quicker way of having supply made available by ESB Networks, but it is important that the guidelines set out below are strictly adhered to. Otherwise the Cert cannot be processed by ECSSA or transmitted to ESB Networks.

- Firstly, the MPRN is vitally important as, without this, ECSSA cannot log on to the ESB Networks website to confirm that the address shown on the Cert matches that on the website.
In relation to MPRN numbers, it is important to note that these are 11 digit numbers which currently commence with 1. Numbers sequences beginning with the digit 5 are sometimes taken to be MPRN numbers but these are in fact ESB Design Numbers and they cannot be used to access the ESB Website.
The MPRN Number will always appear on any receipt which your customer receives from ESB Networks for payment of the capital contribution charges.
In the case of Existing Supplies, the MPRN Number appears on the ESB Bill.
- Secondly, the measurements shown for the Resistance of Protective Conductor and the Insulation Resistance must fall within the acceptable parameters which are, 0.1 to 1 ohm, and greater than .5 megohms, respectively.
- It is vital that the contractor's Registration Number is entered in a clear and legible fashion and that a mobile phone number is also included. When ESB Networks have made supply available, a text is sent to the mobile number provided informing the contractor that supply is now available and that the final connections can be made.
- The type of installation ie. New, Alteration, etc. must be ticked and the contractor must sign the Cert in the space for Pre-connection Tests.
- A contractor must be a current member of ECSSA ie. membership fee paid at the time when the Cert is submitted and ECSSA must have proof of Public Liability Insurance.
- Finally, each Cert must have a Surcharge Stamp fixed to the top right hand corner.

NOTE: The ESB Website is configured in a way which stops the transmission of any Cert which fails to meet the criteria agreed between ESB and the Regulatory Bodies.

Therefore, a Cert without an MPRN, with incorrect values, without a mobile phone number, or a Cert issued by a contractor whose insurance or membership has lapsed, will fail immediately, leaving ECSSA with no option but to return the Cert to the contractor.

With up to 200 Certs per day expected to pass through the Office, it will not be possible to make phone calls to contractors about errors in Certs, so we would appeal to all to ensure that everything is in order before submitting the Cert.

A more detailed article on the above was published in the December 2006 Newsletter and can be downloaded from the ECSSA Website at www.ecssa.ie

Chairman's Comments

Welcome to the Spring 2007 Edition of the ECSSA Newsletter!

After a long trial period where many obstacles had to be overcome, the return of Completion Certs to the Regulatory Bodies, rather than to ESB Offices, will become a reality nationwide on April 1st next.

For the past two years, contractors in Kerry and Wexford have benefited from the convenience of this System. With more and more ESB Offices being closed to the public, it has become more inconvenient for contractors and their customers to get Certs into the ESB Networks System resulting in delay in obtaining connections.

Under the new system, once a Cert arrives by post in the ECSSA Office and is found to be in order, it will be logged on to the ESB Networks Website on the same day thereby ensuring that there is no further delay in putting the provision of supply in motion.



John O'Loughlin

Chairman of ECSSA

Breaking News

An announcement of the formation of a nationwide Trade Association to be known as NECTA (National Electrical Contractors Trade Association) is expected in the immediate future.

One of the early objectives of the new group will be to seek the cancellation of the Registered Employment Agreement for the Electrical Industry and to ensure that contractors and their employees have a choice of Pension Providers rather than the present unsatisfactory situation where a virtual monopoly exists for the CIF operated pension. Contractors from both ECSSA and RECI are among the founders of this new Association, which plans to hold meetings around the country in the coming months. Hopefully, our next Newsletter will have full details of the new Association and its operations.

ECSSA welcomes the formation of such a representative body for electrical contractors, as it is quite clear that the existing trade associations have failed to properly serve the needs of the vast majority of contractors in the industry in this country.



Merrion Fire + Safety
Castleknock Avenue
Dublin 15, Ireland
www.merrionfire.com
www.merrionwayfinder.com

Tel +353 (1) 8201093
Fax +353 (1) 8206510
Email info@merrionfire.com



Merrion Fire + Safety supply top quality, tried and trusted brands of professional fire equipment at competitive prices, nationwide.

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Unbeatable Project Pricing
Unrivalled Technical Support

GUARANTEED



Notice to Members

1. PSA (Private Security Authority)

PSA have recently accepted that wiring for intruder alarms is not a licensable activity and that contractors can pull in the wires for alarm systems while doing the main electrical work and, in doing so, they are not in breach of the Private Security Services Act.

ECSSA pointed out, from the very outset, that wiring for alarms systems could not be construed as a breach of the Act and thankfully the PSA have seen the common sense of this approach.

However, they seem to have adopted a tunnel vision in relation to the word "alarms", with one member recently receiving a letter requiring him to cease and desist from having the word "alarms" on his van sign. It appears that PSA do not yet realise that the word "alarms" can also be applied to Fire Alarm installations, which this particular contractor has been carrying out for years and which he intends to continue with. Furthermore, there is nothing to suggest that actually advertising "alarms" on a vehicle is prohibited under any section of the Private Security Services Act!

2. Sealing of Meters and Isolators

When ESB Networks first introduced the new type meter with integrated isolator, it was normal for ESB to put a red seal on the section of the meter which should not be opened, and a green seal on the terminals where the contractor connects the customer tails. This practice seems to have been discontinued and now only the ESB terminals are sealed, with free access to the customer side.

Contractors have reported finding covers removed and lying in the meter cabinets, or sometimes missing altogether. This easy access to the customer terminals has led to situations where builders,

householders, and other unauthorised persons have made installations live without any prior checking of polarity or fault loop impedance. We have asked ESB Networks to resume the practice of fitting a green numbered seal on the consumer terminals and making it clear that the removal of this seal, by anybody other than the contractor who had issued the Cert for the installation, could have the effect of removing liability from the electrical contractor for any injury or loss caused by malfunction of the installation when first switched on. Hopefully ESB will accede to this request in the near future.

We also strongly recommend to contractors to fit a numbered seal on the isolator once they have made the connection.

3. Extension Boxes

We have had numerous enquires from contractors who find that some houses now have up to 50mm of wall insulation. This means that metal boxes, sitting in a normal chase, are over 50mm behind the face of the socket, creating an open space between the box and the socket. Extension collars are available for both single and double boxes in depths of 16mm, 25mm, and 35mm.

An Extension collar is not yet available for the bar type box (MK887), but it is hoped to introduce these in the near future.

The Extensions are manufactured by Appelby, and the Irish Distributor is Electrium who can be contacted on 01-4513303.

4. IS EN 50131-1: 1997 Certification

The Private Security Authority have endorsed IS EN 50131-1:1997 as the required standard for licensing of contractors in the intruder alarm installation sector.

EQA (Ireland) Ltd is an independent certification body, established to provide assessment and surveillance service to individuals and companies, including the intruder alarm sector.

EQA is licensed and approved by both the Irish National Accreditation Board and the PSA.

A special scheme price of €950 & VAT has been agreed with EQA Ireland Ltd for the initial audit and certification costs for any ECSSA Member who wishes to obtain a license from the PSA.

A book of Completion Certs, valued at €100, is included as part of this package. Additional Certs are available at €5 plus VAT which is a very competitive price when compared with alternative certification bodies. Once a contractor is registered for the scheme, they receive a pack with sample documentation to assist in the preparation for the audit and certification.

EQA can be contacted at: **EQA(Ireland) Ltd, 15 Greenmount House, Greenmount Office Park, Harolds Cross, Dublin 6W - Telephone 01 4734188 / Fax 01-4734191 / Email: info@eqa.ie / Website: www eqa.ie.**

5. Advertising

Scarcely a week goes by but some one of our members complains of having been contacted by some publisher or other trying to sell advertising, on the basis that ECSSA have given the publisher the name of the contractor. Such a sales pitch is nothing more than a blatant lie. These publishers are obtaining contractors details from the website and are pretending that ECSSA expect the contractor to provide support advertising for some, usually pointless, feature which the publication is running as a money gathering exercise.

It is not the policy of ECSSA to ask or require any contractor to spend any money on any particular form of advertising as we feel that is entirely a matter for each individual to decide whether such advertising will bring any particular benefit to his business. There is a whole raft of publications aimed at the construction industry, each and every one of which claims to be the definitive voice of the industry, and to be a vital advertising area for electrical



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contractors. ECSSA does not differentiate between these publications and any inference that ECSSA expects its members to advertise in any of them is entirely false and without foundation.

6. Change of Address

Every year as soon as the Directory is circulated, we have a sizeable number of phone calls from contractors complaining that their address or company name is incorrectly shown. Unfortunately, nothing can be done about the incorrect address in the Directory, and in the majority of cases they have only themselves to blame, as the addresses and trading names shown are the most up to date that have been given to ECSSA by the member.

While changes can be made to the website, generally at the end of each month, this can only be done on receipt of written notification, and

there is an onus on contractors to check the address shown on the website particularly coming towards the end of the year as, if errors are allowed to remain uncorrected, these errors will be reproduced in the following year's Directory. The same applies to membership cards, as these are pre-printed, based the most up to date information which we have at the first of December each year.

It is unrealistic to suggest that all these changes of address take place in a few weeks around Christmas, so the reality of the situation is that people are not making a point of notifying ECSSA immediately that they have moved to a new address, thereby allowing the proper updating of the ECSSA database.

We also get complaints from contractors who send in orders, are amazed that the goods do not arrive, and then find that they have neglected to inform us that they have moved

from the address which we have for them and which is the address to which the goods will have been dispatched.

SO PLEASE MAKE A POINT OF IMMEDIATELY INFORMING ECSSA, IN WRITING, AS SOON AS YOU RELOCATE TO A DIFFERENT ADDRESS AND IN THAT WAY YOU WILL BE HELPING US TO HELP YOU!

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT A
SURCHARGE STAMP**



**IS STUCK ON EACH CERT
RETURNED**