

# energy

## Bulletin

ISSN 1323-8957

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## New Australian Standards for the gas supply industry

Standards Australia has recently taken over responsibility for the Australian Gas Association codes and is progressively converting them to Australian Standards.

As part of this process, the Standards Australia – 008 Gas Distribution Committee, of which Energy Safety is a member, has recently completed work on and released two Australian Standards that relate to gas distribution systems:

- AS 4645 – 2005 "Gas distributions network management" which replaces AG 603 "Gas Distribution Code"; and
- AS 1697 – 2005 "Installation and maintenance of steel pipe systems for gas" which replaces AS 1697 "SAA Gas Pipelines Code".

AS 4645 – 2005 is an outcome-based standard which specifies requirements for safe management of a fuel gas distribution network operating at pressures up to 1,050 kPa through the life cycle of all elements of that network. The Standard was prepared to provide an adequate risk-based framework for management of a gas distribution system, by specifying performance requirements

and avoiding detailed prescription as much as possible. Where appropriate, detailed requirements (which tend to be prescriptive) are provided in AS 1697 for steel pipes and AS 3723 for plastic pipes.

AS 1697 – 2005 specifies materials, design, construction, installation, testing and maintenance requirements for steel piping systems for the distribution of fuel gas suitable for domestic, commercial and industrial users where the pressure of the gas is no greater than 1,050 kPa.

It is intended that both these Standards will be included in Schedule 2 of the *Gas Standards (Gas Supply and System Safety) Regulations 2000*. AS 1697 will also be included in Schedule 7 of the *Gas Standards (Gasfitting and Consumer Gas Installation) Regulations 1999*.



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## New Minister for Energy

The Hon Alan J Carpenter MLA has been appointed as the Minister for State Development and Energy, following the Gallop Labor government's return for a second term and subsequent Cabinet reshuffle.

Mr Carpenter graduated from the University of Western Australia in 1979 with an Arts degree (Politics) and commenced his career as a journalist. He pursued a number of jobs throughout WA, South East Asia and Europe until 1986 when he returned to WA. He then worked as a political reporter for Channel 7 and later with ABC TV. In April 1996, he resigned from the ABC to seek ALP endorsement for the new seat of Willagee. Mr Carpenter won the seat in December of that year.

Mr Carpenter held a number of Shadow portfolios until he became the Minister for Education, Sport & Recreation and Indigenous Affairs in February 2001. He gained the portfolio of Training in January 2003.



Hon Alan J Carpenter MLA, Minister for State Development and Energy

## The State Administrative Tribunal and related changes to disciplinary proceedings

As foreshadowed in Energy Bulletin No. 34 (January 2005), the State Administrative Tribunal (SAT) commenced operation on 1 January 2005.

The SAT has taken over some of the disciplinary functions of a myriad of Government and industry boards and tribunals. This includes some of the electrical and gas worker discipline functions of the Electrical Licensing Board and the Director of Energy Safety.

The *Electricity Act 1945*, *Electricity (Licensing) Regulations 1991*, *Gas Standards Act 1972* and *Gas Standards (Gasfitting and Consumer Gas Installations) Regulations 1999* were amended as part of the process of establishing the SAT. The amendments came into effect on 1 January 2005 (the commencement date of the SAT).

The creation of the SAT will not change any of the requirements relating to the issuing of electrical and gas licences. It will, however, change roles of the Electrical Licensing Board (for electrical contractors and workers) and the Director of Energy Safety (for gas fitters) in relation to disciplinary actions.



The Electrical Licensing Board and Director of Energy Safety will now only conduct disciplinary proceedings against licensed electrical contractors and workers and gas fitters when, if the case were proven, the outcome would not warrant the cancellation or suspension of a licence (referred to as 'summary proceedings'). Cases where the outcome, if the case were proven would warrant the cancellation or suspension of a licence, must be referred to the SAT by the Electrical Licensing Board or the Director of Energy Safety.

The Electrical Licensing Board can be expected to continue to require an electrician to undergo a competency test if investigation of an incident leads to serious doubts about the person's competence. If the person fails the test, the Electrical Licensing Board may cancel or suspend the operative's licence. Similar action is available to the Director of Energy Safety in regard to gas fitters.

The rights of electricians to appeal against orders made by the ELB have been repealed, but appeal rights against orders made by the SAT will remain. Gas fitters' appeal rights against orders made by the Director of Energy Safety remain, as do appeal rights against orders made by the SAT.

## Free email subscription service for Energy Bulletins

Energy Bulletins, incorporating the Electrical Focus and Gas Focus, are generally available:

- by normal mail to registered electrical contractors and gas fitters; and
- from Energy Safety's website.

A subscription service is now available for persons who would

like to be advised when new issues of the Energy Bulletins are available from Energy Safety's website.

To register for this free service, please access Energy Safety's Internet page at <http://www.energy.safety.wa.gov.au/publications/> and provide the required information.

## Energy Safety launches 'new-look' website

Many readers will be familiar with Energy Safety's website that has been in existence since July 2002, when Energy Safety was incorporated into the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection.

Website technologies are constantly being improved and recently the opportunity arose for Energy Safety to upgrade its website. Energy Safety's 'new-look' website was launched on 1 February 2005.

Whilst much of the content remains unchanged at this point in time, it has been repackaged to suit a new style of navigation. This changed format should assist visitors to the site to find information easier and quicker.

Some of the new information now available from Energy Safety's website includes:

- Electrical and gas licensing information (see following article "Electrical and gas information now available on-line")
- Electrical accidents and gas incidents statistics, including fatalities
- An overview of Energy Safety's emergency management functions.

As with all of Energy Safety's public information, your suggestions regarding content, ease of use, enhancements etc are welcomed. Suggestions should be forwarded by email to [energysafety@docep.wa.gov.au](mailto:energysafety@docep.wa.gov.au).



## Electrical and gas licensing information now available on-line

Over the past few years, Energy Safety has received repeated requests for details of operatives (electrical contractors, electricians, electrical workers and gas workers) to be made available on-line. The reasons for wanting to access this information are varied.

Energy Safety's Licensing Information System is now available, accessible from the home page of Energy Safety's website.

There are a number of levels of access to the licensing information:

- members of the general public – to establish the bona fide of electrical contractors, restricted electrical workers and gas workers;
- electrical contractors – to check that employee electricians and electrical workers are currently licensed;
- electrical and gas operatives:
  - to change their licensing details, and
  - to notify a change of address;
- registered training organisations – to check licensing details of trainees; and
- network operators and other licensing jurisdictions – to check licensing details of electrical and gas operatives.

Members of the general public can view the information provided for public access without a password. All other levels of access (ie. electrical and gas operatives) require the use of a password – and that is only available if the person has an email address.

A person's level of access determines the extent of information that will be available.

The information is not intended to be a 'white pages' directory to locate, for example, electrical contractors who operate in a certain geographical area. And information

such as addresses and phone numbers is not made available to the general public.

Industry persons and electrical and gas operatives who require password access have been notified of their new password. The first time that a password holder logs on to the system, he or she will be prompted to change to a new password.

If a person loses a password, a new password can be initiated on-line from within the system.

## Power generation plans for WA

The State Government's plan to secure power supplies over the next decade has taken a major step forward after 14 companies expressed interest in providing extra power capacity in 2007.

Prior to the 2005 election, then Energy Minister Eric Ripper stated that the interest was a sign that the Government's plan – to encourage private power generators into the electricity market to compete with Western Power – was working.

The Government had sought expressions of interest from power generators in October 2004 to supply up to 420 MW in 2007 – and had received 2,742 MW in offers. The options include renewable energy, gas, coal and other fuels, to meet the State's future needs.

A new Western Power commissioned 'peaking' power station is to be in service at Kemerton later in 2005, as well as a new Alinta co-generation plant at Pinjarra. Western Australia's largest wind farm, at Walkaway, will also come on stream in 2005.

The Government has given the go-ahead for another 120 MW planned dual fuel peaking plant planned for

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the summer of 2006-07. Alinta has announced a second co-generation plant at Pinjarra, feeding into the State's electricity grid from 2006. A second privately owned wind farm, Emu Downs, is also expected to be operational in mid 2006.

Tender processes are well advanced for a new base-load power station to be operational by late 2008.

Mr Ripper announced that, as part of the Government's electricity market reforms, a new Government owned body, the Independent Market Operator, would have responsibility for overseeing the operations of the competitive market and procuring more capacity if needed. The IMO was established on 1 January 2005.

The Government's reform program aims to achieve a secure, reliable and efficient supply of electricity to businesses and households in the State, with greater choice and competition.

## National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority (NOPSA)

On 1 January 2005, the National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority (NOPSA) commenced operations from its new headquarters in Perth. NOPSA is a statutory authority regulating Commonwealth, State and Territory coastal waters with accountability to the relevant Ministers.

The role of NOPSA is to administer offshore petroleum safety legislation. The organisation's primary functions include:

- improving health and safety outcomes across the offshore petroleum industry;
- ensuring the health and safety regulation of the offshore petroleum industry is provided to standards that are equal to the best in the world; and
- reducing the regulatory burden on the offshore petroleum industry (which operates across multiple jurisdictions) by delivering a consistent and comprehensive health and safety regime.

Prior to the establishment of NOPSA, the Department of Industry Resources carried out this work in Western Australia.

NOPSA will require all offshore oil and gas operators to submit safety cases in relation to their proposed operations. The safety cases will need to include a detailed risk analysis that identifies all hazards, describes how risks are to be controlled and details which safety management practices are in place.

Work will not be allowed to commence until the safety case has been approved by NOPSA, which has up to 90 days to do so.

As a means of ensuring ongoing safety, NOPSA intends to inspect and audit operators to check compliance with their relevant safety case.

*Further information about NOPSA is available from its website at <http://www.nopsa.gov.au>.*

## Safety equipment for electrical workers

Electrical contractors, electrical workers and supervising electrical workers are reminded of the need

to provide and wear/use protective equipment when carrying out electrical work.

Of particular concern are the hazards faced by electrical workers when carrying out electrical work on, or in the vicinity of, live electrical equipment.

Supervising electrical workers have a responsibility under the *Electricity (Licensing) Regulations 1991* [Regulation 50(4)(e)] to ensure all persons involved in electrical work are:

1. properly equipped in respect of safety equipment that is necessary in relation to the electrical work being carried out; and
2. properly using the supplied safety equipment.

The range of safety equipment available for use when carrying out electrical work includes:

- Face shields – available in various insulation levels and resistant to arc faults
- Safety helmets – manufactured to accommodate face shields
- Flameproof protective clothing – designed to afford protection against arc faults
- Appropriately insulated hand tools – used where the risk of inadvertent contact with live electrical equipment may occur
- Special purpose equipment, such as cable sheath knives.

Local suppliers offer a wide range of electrical safety equipment as well as services such as testing of electrical safety equipment to confirm safety integrity. Safety equipment and related services may also be sourced through the Internet.

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For further information related to Energy Safety's articles, please contact Harry Hills (telephone 08 9422 5208 or email [hhills@docep.wa.gov.au](mailto:hhills@docep.wa.gov.au)).

Alternative formats of the Energy Bulletin may be available to meet the needs of people with disabilities.