

Electrical Safety Office

Connection and reconnection of hazardous area installations

This information sheet gives practical advice and information about legislative requirements for owners of hazardous area installations. To determine the actual legislative provisions, please refer to the *Electrical Safety Act 2002* and the *Electrical Safety Regulation 2002*.

What is a hazardous area?

A hazardous area is an area in which an explosive atmosphere is present, or may be expected to be present, in quantities that require special precautions for the construction, installation and use of electrical equipment. The explosive atmosphere may be caused by the presence of flammable liquid, gas or vapour, or by the presence of combustible dust.

Examples of hazardous areas

Hazardous areas include, but are not limited to: petrol stations, spray-paint shops, refineries and major processing plants, laboratories, sewage treatment, pumping plants, coal handling plants and grain handling facilities.

Penalties and offences

Failure to comply with the obligations under Section 27 of the *Electrical Safety Act 2002* may result in legal proceedings that could include penalties up to \$1,000,000 (\$200,000 for an individual) or three years imprisonment.

Under Section 153 of the *Electrical Safety Regulation 2002*, a person must not connect or reconnect an electrical installation located

in a hazardous area to a source of electricity, after electrical work has been performed on the installation, unless the electrical work has been inspected by an accredited auditor and found to be electrically safe and compliant with the Wiring Rules and other relevant Australian standards such as the AS/NZS 60079 and AS/NZS 61241 series of standards.

Obligations and responsibilities

The owner of the hazardous area installation must ensure that:

- the installation is inspected, tested and found to be electrically safe by an accredited auditor before the installation is connected or reconnect to the electricity supply; and
- all requirements, as stipulated by the accredited auditor, are met and are maintained during the life of the installation; and
- the electrical contractor engaged can show competence to conduct the electrical installation work required; and
- all documents relating to the hazardous area, including any written notifications from the accredited auditor, are placed in the 'Hazardous Area Verification Dossier'.

The owner has the responsibility to:

- accept or reject the design and equipment used in the installation, ensuring compliance with legislative and Australian standard requirements; and
- accept the use of any particular equipment or method of installation in accordance with, and ensuring compliance with, legislative and

- Australian standard requirements, and to obtain advice on this from people competent to provide such advice; and
- maintain an up to date and accessible 'Hazardous Area Verification Dossier'.

What must your accredited auditor do?

- Inspect the electrical installation located in the hazardous area, and confirm the installation has been tested to ensure it is electrically safe and is in accordance with the Wiring Rules and other relevant Australian standards; and
- provide written notification to the owner / occupier of the hazardous area or their representative detailing the outcome of the inspection; and

- the auditor, or the employer of the accredited auditor, must make and keep a copy of the inspection report for at least five years.

Further information

For further details on accredited auditors and a list of accredited auditors please go to the Electrical Safety Office internet site – www.electricalsafety.qld.gov.au. For or contact Infoline on 1300 650 662.

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