

# A practical guide to using Certificates of Electrical Safety

	Prescribed	Non-prescribed
When to use	See Regulation 249 of the Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019 for the definition of prescribed work requiring inspection	All other work on fixed wiring above ELV (50V AC or 120V ripple-free DC) except for patient treatment areas. Refer to Regulation 249 of the Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019 “the replacement of one component part of prescribed electrical installation work that can be entered on a non-prescribed certificate.
What a REC must do (or other RP)	<p>Purchase COES.</p> <p>Ensure COES is issued to LEWs for all work.</p> <p>Obtain copy of completed COES from LEWs.</p> <p>Lodge required information on COES via the IVR.</p> <p>Arrange for inspection by a LEI.</p> <p>After inspection, provide copies of COES to customer, inspector, ESV and retailer/distribution business, where required.</p> <p>If COES is a paper copy, keep the Responsible Person (RP) copy for 3 years.</p>	<p>Purchase COES.</p> <p>Ensure COES is issued to LEWs for all work.</p> <p>Obtain copy of completed COES from LEWs.</p> <p>Lodge required information on COES via the IVR.</p> <p>Provide copies of COES to customer and ESV (electricity supplier may request a copy at times).</p> <p>If COES is a paper copy, keep the Responsible Person (RP) copy for 3 years.</p>
What a LEW must do	<p>Ensure work complies with the Regulations, applicable standards and is tested.</p> <p>Complete and sign a COES for all work to certify compliance. Provide completed COES to REC (or other RP).</p>	
When to complete and sign	Within four business days of completing the work.	
When to register on the internet or IVR (phone)	Within two business days of completing the certificate of compliance.	

	Prescribed	Non-prescribed
<b>When to arrange inspection</b>	Inspection must occur within eight business days of completion of the work.	Not applicable.
<b>When to issue a certificate to all relevant parties</b>	Within four business days of receiving certificate of inspection.	Within one month of completing the COES.
<b>Special comments and tips</b>	<p>A prescribed certificate and inspection is required when replacing a main switchboard and the electricity distribution business (DB) is not advised/involved i.e. no truck appointment.</p> <p>You must issue a certificate even if the work is inspected and found to have defects. Defects must be recorded on the certificate.</p>	<p>If you require a licence to perform the work, you must issue a COES.</p> <p>Issue a new certificate each time a circuit or equipment is put into service and/or made available to the customer for use.</p> <p>Where defects are found during an ESV audit, you must issue a new COES and refer to the original COES number at Item 5.</p>
<b>More information and assistance</b>	Refer to relevant sections in this document for further information or contact ESV at 1800 800 158.	

Notes:

1. This is a practical guide only and is not intended to cover all situations. Refer to the Electricity Safety Act and the Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019 for full details.
2. This guide assumes that the REC is the person responsible for the work when there is no REC responsible, the electrician in charge is the RP and takes on responsibility for the tasks listed for RECs in this guide. This may mean that the LEIW is responsible for both REC and LEIW tasks listed above.

## A guide for COES lodgement and distribution timeframes

Non-prescribed certificate timeframe for lodgement and distribution			
Completion of work	LEW to complete and sign the certificate of compliance in respect of that work. If the worker is not the RP, hand the certificate to the RP within four business days from completion the work. Electrical Safety Act 44(2)	RP to give electronic notification (IVR or Internet) of completion of the certificate within two business days from completion of certificate. Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 263	RP to distribute all copies within one month from when the work is completed. Send copies to customer and ESV. REC must retain their paper copy for three years. Electrical Safety Act 45A (6)(c)
	Prescribed certificate timeframe for lodgement and distribution		
Completion of work	LEW to complete and sign the certificate of compliance in respect of that work. If the worker is not the RP, hand the certificate to the RP within four business days from completion the work. Electrical Safety Act 44(2)	RP to give electronic notification (IVR or Internet) of completion of the certificate within two business days from completion of the certificate and arrange inspection. Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 263	
	Inspection must occur after the completion of the certificate and electronic notification within COES within eight business days from the completion of the work. Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 250	Electrical inspector give electronic notification (IVR or internet) of inspection and within four business days return the completed COES to the RP. Electrical Safety Act 44(3)	RP to distribute all copies within four business days. Copies to all relevant parties, where required. REC must retain their paper copy for three years. Electrical Safety Act 45A (6)(a)
Completion of work	Periodic certificate timeframe for lodgement and distribution		
	LEW to complete and sign the certificate of compliance in respect of that work. If the worker is not the RP, hand the certificate to the RP within four business days from completion the work. Electrical Safety Act 44(2)	RP to give electronic notification (IVR or internet) of completion of the certificate within two business days from completion of certificate Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 263	RP to distribute all copies within one month from when the work is completed. Copies to customer and ESV, including all attachments. RP must retain their paper copy for three years. Electrical Safety Act 45A (6)(c)

## Frequently asked questions

### **Do certificates have to be issued even if the customer doesn't want one?**

Yes. RECs and RPs are required by law to issue certificates for prescribed and non-prescribed electrical installation work to help ensure the safety of the public and workers. The certificate also indicates to the customer that a REC or a licensed person rather than an unlicensed person have carried out the work. Electrical installation work is installation, repair, alteration and maintenance.

### **When is a job considered completed?**

A job is considered complete when any circuit is reactivated (put into service) or made available to the customer for use. In practice, this means that you should provide a certificate at the completion:

- of each day's work (at the same installation) or part thereof, if the circuit has been put into service or made available to the customer to use, and
- if you are not returning to complete the work.

This is not necessarily at the same time that you invoice the customer.

### **I carry out non-prescribed maintenance work; can I issue one certificate for all the work in that month with my monthly invoice?**

Not unless you have completed only one electrical job for that customer during that month. Where you complete maintenance work on a single visit to the customer, and re-activate the circuit, a non-prescribed certificate will be required each time work is completed on that day and the circuit is made available to the customer to use. As a result, you may need to issue more than one certificate during the month. Although you have up to a month from completing the work to provide the customer with copies of the certificates. The opportunity is available for the REC and/or RP to plan their work effectively.

### **Do non-prescribed electrical certificates have to be registered on the internet or ESV's IVR telephone system?**

Yes. The same as for certificates for prescribed electrical work.

### **Can non-prescribed electrical work be included on a certificate for prescribed electrical work?**

Only when the non-prescribed electrical work is completed at the same time as the prescribed electrical work.

### **Is changing a switchboard as planned work prescribed or non-prescribed work?**

Yes. The changing of a switchboard assembly is prescribed electrical work. It requires a prescribed certificate of electrical safety and an electrical inspection.

Note: Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019—Regulation 249

**What is the difference between ‘Date of completion of work’ and ‘Date certified’ on a certificate?**

Date of completion of work is the actual date the electrical work was completed as described on the COES.

Date certified is the date the LEIW tested and confirmed the electrical installation work complies with the ESA and ES(I)R.

**How do I obtain more information from ESV?**

Most information is available on ESV’s website: [www.esv.vic.gov.au](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au)

Requests for more information can be made by:

- email: [coes@energysafe.vic.gov.au](mailto:coes@energysafe.vic.gov.au)
- facsimile: (03) 9686 2197
- letter to:

Energy Safe Victoria

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