

# Electrical Safety Regulator

Annual Report 2024 - 2025

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## Role and Responsibilities of the Electricity Safety Regulator

The role of the Electrical Safety Regulator was established by the introduction of the *Electrical Safety Act 2022* (the Act) which came into force on 1 July 2024.

The functions of the Electricity Safety Regulator are to:

- support the activities of the Electrical Safety Board and its committees, to
- act as the chairperson of the Board
- advise the Minister on electrical safety matters generally,
- report on the operation and effectiveness of the Act;
- monitor and enforce compliance with the Act;
- provide advice and information on electrical safety to the holders of licences and to the community;
- administer licences; and
- give approvals and authorisations for the purposes of the Act.

The Electricity Safety Regulator must act independently when making a decision under this Act but is otherwise subject to direction in the person's capacity as a public sector employee.

## *Electrical Safety Act 2022 and Electrical Safety Regulations 2024*

In 2017-18, the then Government established a tri-partite Electrical Safety and Licensing Reference Group to examine the *Electrical Reform Act 2000* and the now repealed *Electrical Workers and Contractors Act 1978*. The purpose of the review was to examine and provide direction to the Northern Territory Government about what amendments are necessary to address concerns in relation to electrical safety and electrical licensing. NT WorkSafe participated in this review.

The Electrical Safety and Licensing Reference Group completed their report in December 2019. In 2020 Cabinet accepted the recommendations and authorised the development of new legislation.

As a result of the work and recommendations of the Reference Group, the Act was passed however its commencement was delayed to allow for the development of the Electrical Safety Regulations. There was a delay in the development of the Electrical Safety Regulations due to limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Electrical Safety Regulations were developed over the period from 2023 to 2024 and

The former Part 4.7 of the *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011* that dealt with general electrical safety in workplaces and energised electrical work has also been repealed. These provisions are now contained within the *Electrical Safety Regulations 2024*.

The purpose of the new Electrical Safety legislation is to prevent people from being killed or injured by electricity, and to prevent property from being destroyed or damaged by electricity. To this end, the legislation:

- creates the role of the Electrical Safety Regulator and establishes a new Electrical Safety Board;
- imposes obligations on persons who may affect the electrical safety of others by acts or omissions;
- enhances the requirements for safety management systems for electricity entities;
- introduces safety requirements for all electrical goods through the adoption of a national scheme; and
- provides for the safety of all persons through:
  - modernised licensing of electrical workers and electrical contractors;
  - establishment of a discipline committee for persons who perform electrical work;
  - additional powers to inspectors, such as improvement notices to require the remedying non-compliant electrical work;
  - encouraging compliance through provisions for prosecutions of various offences under the Act.

The Electrical Safety legislation applies to all places where electricity is transmitted or consumed. It is not limited to workplaces, but extend to domestic residences and public places. The legislation encompasses:

- all electrical installations, works of an electricity entity, electrical equipment, cathodic protection systems and activities conducted near and on exposed live electrical parts; and
- all persons who may affect the electrical safety of others and whose electrical safety may be affected.

### **Safety Management and Mitigation Plans**

In accordance with the Act, all electrical entities are required to develop and comply with a safety management and mitigation plan that has been approved by the Electrical Safety Regulator. Amongst other things, safety management and mitigation plans must be prepared in consultation with representatives of workers and contractors and set out how hazards and risks will be managed. The responsibility for the oversight of safety management and mitigation plans was transferred from the Utilities Commission to the Electrical Safety Regulator on 01 July 2024.

### Information Sessions

The Electricity Safety Regulator provided a number of information sessions / briefings in the reporting period.

The Electrical Safety Unit continues to provide support to the Charles Darwin University to educate electrical apprentices about the regulator’s roles and functions, and provide general electrical safety advice.

In addition to the abovementioned sessions, media releases and information are also published on the NT WorkSafe website.

### Advice and information on electrical safety to the holders of licences and to the community

The Electricity Safety Regulator publishes Safety Alerts and Information Bulletins on the NT WorkSafe website as a means of providing information and advice. The following information products were new or had content updated in 2024-2025:

#### Safety Alerts

- electrical safety risk in home meter boxes from damaged service fuse; and

#### Bulletins

- following the introduction of Electrical Safety legislation on the 1 July 2024, all Electrical Safety bulletins were refreshed to align with the new act and regulations.

The full catalogue of information products available are listed at:

<https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/electrical-safety>

### Activities of the Electrical Safety Regulator for 2024-2025

Regulatory Requirement	No	Description
Certificates of Compliance (CoC’s) audited	726*	Interactions / workplace visits
Complaints	94	Safety Concerns
Notifications of incidents involving electric shock	79	Electric Shocks
Notifications of incidents involving fire	10	Electrical Fires

Regulatory Requirement	No	Description
Notifications of incidents involving fatal electrocution	0	Electrocution

The Electrical Safety unit was staffed with one T6 Principal Inspector and five T5 Senior WorkSafe Inspectors, Electrical.

\*Interaction statistics are reduced due to both planned and unplanned leave, a staffing matter and a temporary transfer. Electronic lodgement of CoC's was introduced in this financial year resulting in 15,887 certificates lodged online. Paper certificates were also received however statistics for these are not able to be provided due to bulk lodgements.

### Electrical Licence Applications

License Type	Description	Received*	Approved	Total in NT
Electrical work licence (unrestricted and restricted)	a person must hold an electrical work licence to perform or supervise electrical work	1507	1090	6760
Electrical contractor licence	required by a business if they perform electrical work for a fee, or employ a licensed electrical worker, who performs work for a fee	546	399	989
In-house electrical licence	A licence for businesses which employ electrical workers to undertake electrical work incidental to the businesses operations	12	5	5
Registrations of apprentices	an application to the Regulator to be registered as an apprentice	183	157	1039
Trainee permits	a licence to perform electrical work under the direct	33	20	88

License Type	Description	Received*	Approved	Total in NT
	supervision of a person who holds an electrical work licence			
Mutual recognition	a licence, permit, certificate or other authority issued under a law of a State or another Territory to be equivalent to an electrical work licence	543	451	Not available

\*This figure includes applications received, but not yet processed due to being incomplete.

The electrical licensing unit was staffed with one T5 Licensing Officer to process electrical licences as per the Machinery of Government transfer of the licensing function of the electrical safety legislation. Other internal resources were diverted to meet the licensing demand.

The Electrical Safety Unit of NT WorkSafe continued engagement throughout 2024-2025 with Northern Territory electrical contractors regarding implementation of emerging clean and renewable energy technologies.