

Ensuring your electrical equipment complies with the Electrical Equipment Safety System (EESS)

Introduction

In Australia the Electrical Equipment Safety System (EESS) forms the basis of product safety. The EESS requires compliance to relevant electrical safety standards, registration of the responsible supplier and in the case of level 2 or 3 equipment, equipment registration is also required before a product is sold. The requirements vary depending on the risk posed by the product, and risk is separated into three risk levels, with different requirements applying to each.

The EESS has been adopted by Queensland, Western Australia, Victoria (from 1 April 2019) and Tasmania. The EESS is recognised in all jurisdictions throughout Australia and New Zealand.

In the past, equipment safety relied on predominantly local manufactured products being certified by the state regulator. In Tasmania this was done by the Hydro Electric Corporation. Today equipment is mostly imported, and many sales occur online through a wide variety of vendors. By mandating the required safety standards, and requiring certification of high risk equipment, it will be possible to identify the responsible supplier/s should a product being offered for sale be found to be unsafe or dangerous. This provides a high level of safety for consumers.

In-scope Electrical Equipment

In-scope electrical equipment is low voltage electrical equipment that is:

- rated at a voltage greater than 50 V AC RMS or 120 V ripple-free DC (low voltage)
- rated at a voltage less than 1000 V AC RMS or 1500 V ripple-free DC (high voltage), and
- designed or marketed as suitable for household, personal or similar use.

It is immaterial whether the equipment is also designed or marketed for commercial or industrial purposes.

Items that are not household, personal or similar and therefore, falls outside of the scope of the EESS, must still meet the requirements of Section 1.7 of AS/NZS 3000 when installed in an electrical installation.

It is important to note, **electrical equipment must always comply with the relevant safety standards.**

Regulatory Compliance Mark

All Level 1, 2 or 3 electrical equipment offered for sale by registered Responsible Suppliers must be marked with the Regulatory Compliance Mark (RCM), as illustrated below:



The RCM should be placed in accordance with AS/NZS 4417.1 (i.e. generally on the external surface of the electrical equipment as near as possible to the model identification).

Level 3 High Risk

Level 3 electrical equipment is classified as a potential high risk level. Level 3 equipment must meet the following requirements:

- There must be a registered Responsible Supplier whose name and details are linked to the equipment;
- The equipment must be registered on the National Database;
- The equipment must have a valid Certificate of Conformity (Certificate) from a recognised certifier; and,
- The equipment must be marked with the Regulatory Compliance Mark (RCM)

Level 2 Medium Risk

Level 2 electrical equipment is classified as a potential medium risk and must meet the following requirements:

- The item must be registered on the National Database and linked to a registered Responsible Supplier;
- The Responsible Supplier must keep or have access to a Compliance Folder proving that the equipment meets the relevant standard as in force at the time the equipment is registered and produce that folder to a Regulator within 10 days upon request.
- The equipment must be marked with the Regulatory Compliance Mark (RCM)

The complete official list of Level 2 equipment is contained in the latest edition of AS/NZS 4417.2.

A Compliance Folder contains evidence (including test reports), in English, confirming that the equipment meets the relevant standard. These test reports must be completed by an approved testing entity or a suitably qualified person. A full list of the requirements that a Compliance Folder must contain can be located within the [Equipment Safety Rules](#).

Level 1 Low Risk

Equipment classified as level 1 is any in-scope electrical equipment not classified as Level 3 or Level 2 equipment.

Before level 1 equipment can be sold, the following requirements must be met:

- The equipment must be electrically safe and meet the relevant standard
- The equipment must be marked with the Regulatory Compliance Mark (RCM)
- The equipment must be supplied by a registered Responsible Supplier at the first point of sale in the supply chain.
- Equipment brand and type must be linked to a registered responsible supplier.
- A Responsible Supplier Declaration must also be made as part of the Responsible Supplier process. This declaration states that equipment supplied is electrically safe and meets relevant standards.

Whereas Level 2 and Level 3 type equipment requires registration on the National Database as well as certain evidence of conformance for each of those types of equipment, there is no specified evidence of conformance required to be held by Responsible Suppliers for Level 1 electrical equipment. However, Responsible Suppliers of Level 1 electrical equipment **must hold evidence that the equipment meets the relevant standard as in force at the time the equipment was manufactured or imported** by the Responsible Supplier.

Risk level

As a guide, the list of level 2 and 3 In-scope electrical equipment is available <http://www.eess.gov.au/>

This list includes declared medium and high risk electrical articles, their definitions, and a reference to the applicable design standard that applies.

Level 1 Equipment is everything that is in-scope, but not defined as a higher risk level.

The list as referenced in legislation is contained in the latest edition of AS/NZS 4417.2

Steps to verify compliance

1. Identify Level, check the list of declared products
2. Is it marked with the RCM ?
3. Is the Responsible Supplier registered?
4. Is the equipment registered & current?

To answer any of these questions, search the National Equipment Registration System at <http://www.eess.gov.au> In the case of level 2 and 3 articles registration is compulsory. Level 1 equipment registration is optional and has no cost.

If a Supplier or Equipment is not registered where required, and the product marked with the RCM, the product may not be sold.

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