Electrical Safety in MRC Establishments – Standard of Best Practice

MRC Policy is to provide a safe environment and to employ best practice to ensure health, safety and welfare within the workplace. This document sets the expected standard for best practice for the management of electricity under MRC Health and Safety Policy.

The MRC requires that its directors and team leaders ensure that any work activity involving the use, repair, testing, installation, modification, design or otherwise of electrical equipment presents minimal hazard to any of the above persons.

The MRC requires that work of this nature be done by trained competent staff. The nature of the tasks in hand will determine the level of competency. Formal competency training will be required for individuals employed specifically to work on the repair, testing installation, design or otherwise of electrical equipment.

Scope

This document outlines the procedures and practices which should be in place to comply both with the Guidelines on Maintaining Portable and Transportable Electrical Equipment 2004 (MPTEE) and the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (EWR). The document also draws attention to the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994 (EESR).

Background

The dangers arising from the misuse of portable electrical equipment requires special attention more than any other type of electrical equipment. The Health and Safety Executive recognises this and have published the MPTEE guidelines in order to ensure that such equipment is correctly used, maintained and serviced. The guidelines adopt a broad definition of the type of electrical equipment irrespective of size, shape and weight that is served by an electrical plug and socket, including extension leads.

The Electricity at Work Regulations apply to new buildings and electrical installations. They apply to existing wiring systems on fixed electrical plant forming part of a large experimental plant or machine. MRC staff who design, build, modify or repair equipment must comply with the EWR.

The EESR apply to all electrical equipment designed or adapted for use between 50 and 1,000 volts in the case of alternating current (a.c.) or 75 and 1,500 volts in the case of direct current (d.c.).

From January 1997 new equipment (within the above limits) from within the European Economic Area (EEA) has required a "CE" mark distinctive of a Community Certification Body.

The "CE" mark (Figure 1) is a visible declaration that the electrical equipment satisfies all the provisions of the EESR.
Director's Summary

Any work involving electricity or electrical appliances is potentially hazardous. To ensure the safety of staff, visiting workers and visitors the MRC requires that work of any nature involving electricity or electrical appliances presents a minimum hazard to any of the above persons(s). The person doing the work must be capable to do the task in hand.

A capable person in this context is a person who can do the tasks in hand with a minimum of risk to themselves or to others. Formal competency training will be necessary for individuals specifically employed for, or whose work activities involve, the repair, testing, installation, modification, design or otherwise of electrical equipment.

A competent person is someone who has undertaken formal competency training.
- Directors and ESS team leaders should be aware that electrical work of any kind must be done by a person capable of doing the tasks in hand.
- A competent person will normally be formally trained.
- The nature of the task will determine the level of formal training required.
- Formal training in this context will be the attainment of a recognised qualification in the field of electronics, electrical engineering or electricity or through a recognised apprenticeship in one of the aforesaid areas.

MRC Safety, Security and Resilience Section
Head Office

Guidance Notes

Guidance Note 1 - General Guidance
Guidance Note 2 - Portable Equipment
Guidance Note 3 - Fixed Equipment