

NEWS FROM THE EAST / SOUTH CAPE

BRANCH NEWS

Our first round of general member meetings in East London, Port Elizabeth and George has now been completed.

From the discussions at these meetings it is clear that work is still readily available but unfortunately more and more reports are received from customers that electrical contractors are taking "short cuts" in an effort to meet deadlines. As a result the safety of the electrical installation is compromised and COC's are issued without the necessary care and diligence being exercised.

This results in time consuming meetings between the client and contractor which could be prevented if the work was properly supervised before being certified as safe and compliant.

CONTRACTURAL

A number of enquiries has been received from members over the past months to draw attention to the fact that the JBCC contract price adjustment provisions (CPAP) does not adequately compensate the electrical contractor for the escalation in material prices.

The ECA(SA) contractual standing committee has scheduled a meeting in Johannesburg on 17 April 2008 to prepare a submission to JBCC in order to revise the weighting of the current "basket" of materials which is used by STATS(SA) for purposes of calculating increases in material prices.

Peter Bold, the Executive Director of JBCC will be attending this meeting to provide valuable background information on the composition and use of the JBCC CPAP indices.

The next meeting of the JBCC technical committee is scheduled for Wednesday 14 May 2008 in Midrand and the ECA will represent the interests of specialist subcontractors at this meeting.

Members with any specific input or comment on the CPAP indices are invited to submit these to your regional director.

The ECA has published JBCC contractual guidelines for purposes of providing guidance to members and promoting sound contractual practice in relation to JBCC contract documentation.

The complete set of guidelines appeared in the May 2007 edition of Vector and is available from the ECA on request. Please phone your Regional Director if you need a copy.

COC COURSES

Mossel Bay and Port Elizabeth will be the venues for our next *COC* courses in the East and South Cape.

The courses in Mthatha and East London were extremely well attended, and Cecil Lancaster, the ECA Regional Director in Pretoria, will be the presenter of these 1 day courses.

Please phone the office in Port Elizabeth if you are interested. The courses will be presented on weekdays during May 2008 at venues still to be confirmed.

Members are reminded that *ONLY* an accredited person may inspect and test an electrical installation before he issues a *COC* for the installation.

Section 5.4 of the *COC* clearly states that the accredited person is responsible for the inspection and testing of the installation.

If one interprets Regulation 7(1) of the Electrical Installation Regulations in any other manner or ascribe a different meaning to the wording, it could mean that a person, other than an accredited person, is responsible for the test and inspection, whilst the accredited person only signs the *COC*.

This was certainly *NOT* the intention behind Regulation 7(1).

DEMARCATIION – ELECTRICAL / BUILDING BARGAINING COUNCILS

The jurisdiction dispute between NBCEI(SA) and BIBC in 17 magisterial districts in the East and South Cape is still not resolved. The CCMA in Port Elizabeth issued a "Provisional Ruling" on 31 January 2008.

The Ruling has been challenged by NBCEI(SA) and papers have been filed with the Labour Court on 19 March 2008.

Members in the region are awaiting the outcome of the application with much anticipation.

PRICING FOR PROFIT

The next series of meetings in the East / South Cape will focus on the hourly cost of running a successful and profitable business in the Electrical Industry. Whilst a minority of members are adjusting their charge out rates on an annual basis most other members adopt a "wait and see" attitude before increasing their rates.

There can be no justification in a policy which will only increase rates if the opposition does the same and the ECA wishes to ensure that its members are aware of the actual costs of running their businesses, and more importantly, that members make a profit out of their investment.

The services of an expert has been secured to make presentations at meetings in George, Port Elizabeth, Plettenberg Bay and East London over the next 2 months.