
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations replace the Electricity Supply Regulations 1988 (S.I.1988/1057) and all subsequent amendments (S.I. 1990/390, S.I. 1992/2961, S.I. 1994/533, S.I. 1994/3021 and S.I. 1998/2971).

These Regulations impose requirements regarding the installation and use of electrical networks and equipment owned or operated by generators, distributors (which include, in these Regulations, transmitters), and meter operators, and the participation of suppliers in providing electricity to consumers (all such persons are collectively referred to as “duty holders” in this note). Agents, contractors and sub-contractors of duty holders also have duties under these Regulations. These Regulations were notified in draft to the European Commission in accordance with Council Directive 98/34/EC (O.J. No. L 204, 21.7.1998, p. 37) as amended by Council Directive 98/48/EC (O.J. No. L 217, 5.8.1998, p. 18).

A regulatory impact assessment is available and can be obtained from the Engineering Inspectorate, Department of Trade and Industry, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET. The Department’s publication referred to in regulation 31(9) can be obtained from the same address. Copies of the regulatory impact assessment have been placed in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

The British Standard Requirements referred to in regulation 1(5) is a joint publication by the British Standards Institution and The Institution of Electrical Engineers. Copies can be obtained from The Institution of Electrical Engineers, P.O. Box 96, Stevenage, United Kingdom SGI 2SD.

Part I (regulations 1-5) contains introductory provisions. Regulation 1 contains defined terms; because these Regulations are targeted at technical and safety requirements, some of the defined terms have a different meaning from those used in the Electricity Act 1989 and in the Utilities Act 2000. Regulation 2 contains time limited exemptions for continued use of old equipment not complying with the requirements of the Regulations (e.g. pre-1937 cut-outs) and for the phased introduction of several new requirements (e.g. risk assessment of substations). Regulation 3 contains general duties relating to the safe use and operation of equipment, and requires risk registers to be maintained for substations and overhead lines. Regulation 4 requires duty holders to co-operate as necessary in order that they may each comply with these Regulations. Regulation 5 imposes requirements on duty holders to inspect their equipment and to maintain certain records for at least 10 years.

Part II (regulations 6-10) contains provisions relating to electrical protection and earthing. Regulation 6 imposes a requirement for generators and distributors to install adequate protective devices in their networks. Regulation 7 requires generators and distributors to ensure continuity of the supply neutral conductor. Regulation 8 imposes certain requirements for connections with earth for all systems, and also for high voltage networks and for low voltage networks in particular. Regulation 9 contains requirements for distributors operating protective multiple earthing systems, including the circumstances in which earthing terminals of consumers' installations should not be connected to the distributor’s combined neutral and protective conductor. Regulation 10 contains requirements for earthing of metalwork.

Part III (regulation 11) contains provisions relating to substations, specifically requirements for enclosures, safety and other signs (see Schedule 1), and fire precautions.

Part IV (regulations 12-15) contains provisions relating to underground cables and associated equipment. Regulation 12 imposes restrictions on the use of underground cables. Regulation 13

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally made).

imposes requirements for mechanical protection of such equipment and regulation 14 contains requirements regarding the depth and manner of installation. Regulation 15 requires generators and distributors to maintain maps of underground cables and equipment and to permit inspection by, and to provide copies to, specified persons.

Part V (regulations 16-20) contains provisions relating to overhead lines. Regulation 16 specifies the equipment affected by this Part and imposes a limit on nominal voltage. Regulation 17 imposes minimum heights for overhead electric lines and other cables (with further requirements in Schedule 2). Regulation 18 contains requirements relating to insulation and protection of such lines. Regulation 19 imposes requirements to prevent access to high voltage overhead conductors and to fix safety signs to supports for overhead lines (see Schedule 1). Regulation 20 relates to stay wires for supports carrying overhead lines.

Part VI (regulations 21 and 22) contains provisions relating to generation. Regulation 21 requires persons to ensure switched alternative sources of energy remain isolated from a distributor's network. Regulation 22 imposes requirements on persons intending to operate a source of energy in parallel with a distributor's network.

Part VII (regulations 23-29) contains general requirements relating to the provision of electricity to consumers' installations and other networks. Regulation 23 requires distributors to take precautions against supply failure. Regulation 24 contains provisions relating to distributors' and meter operators' equipment on consumers' premises, including electrical protection, security and connections to consumers' earthing terminals. Regulation 25 specifies requirements for persons connecting new installations or new networks to a distributor's network, with provision for settling disputes arising from a distributor's delay in giving or refusal to give consent for connections. Regulation 26 specifies the procedure if a distributor considers that an installation is unsafe or is causing interference and the procedure to challenge the distributor's refusal to give or continue a supply. Regulation 27 imposes requirements to give information relating to a supply and to maintain the quality of supply within certain tolerance limits. Regulation 28 requires other information affecting a consumer to be provided on request. Regulation 29 permits distributors to discontinue a supply for such period as may be necessary under certain circumstances.

Part VIII (regulations 30-36) contains miscellaneous provisions. Regulation 30 entitles inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State to the provision of facilities and information where an inspection of a generator's or distributor's network or equipment is being carried out. Regulation 31 and Schedule 3 contain a requirement on generators, distributors and meter operators to give particulars to the Secretary of State relating to accidents and other events involving their networks and equipment and domestic consumers' installations. Regulation 32 and Schedule 4 contain a requirement on a distributor to give notice to the Secretary of State of specified interruptions of supply to consumers. Regulation 33 permits the Secretary of State to grant exemptions from the Regulations, and regulation 34 enables the Secretary of State to prohibit the use of networks or equipment owned or operated by duty holders or of a consumer's installation in specified circumstances, with provision for settling disputes. Regulation 35 provides that specified persons who fail to comply with specified provisions of the Regulations commit an offence under section 29 of the Electricity Act 1989. Regulation 36 and Schedule 5 specify Regulations (the Electricity Supply Regulations 1988 and subsequent amendments) which are revoked by these Regulations.