



Guidelines for Development of Safety Management Plans for Remote De-energisation and Re-energisation of Small Customers Premises by Electricity Retailers and Metering Providers

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Scope

This document is made under the *Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Regulation 2018* (the Regulation) and is the:

- Safety management and customer procedures guidelines for the remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation of small customer premises, and
- Safety management and technical procedures guidelines for remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation of small customer premises.

These guidelines set out the minimum requirements to be included in an Electricity Retailer's Safety Management and Customer Procedures Plan and the Metering Provider's Safety Management and Technical Procedures Plan (referred to throughout this document as 'plan').

These guidelines relate to the electricity retailer's process of arranging for a remote de-energisation and/or remote re-energisation of electricity supply of a small customer's premises and metering provider's process of carrying out that service. It does not relate to any procedure or function outside of this requirement.

Note: Exempt sellers are prohibited from carrying out remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation of premises under the Regulation. However, authorised retailers of embedded networks may carry out this activity.

Introduction

Under the Regulation, electricity retailers may arrange for, and metering providers can carry out de-energisation and re-energisation of the premises of small customers by the remote use of an electricity meter, provided:

1. They each have a plan in force,
2. they carry out those services in accordance with the received plan, and
3. a metering provider has received a request from an electricity retailer to undertake such a service.

However, before they can carry out these services, retailers and metering providers must prepare and submit to the Secretary the relevant plan for the safe remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation of premises.

The plans required are for:

Electricity Retailers - Safety Management and Customer Procedures Plan

Metering Providers - Safety Management and Technical Procedures Plan

Submitting a Plan

The proposed plan must address any relevant requirements specified in Clause 38E(2) of the Regulation as well as any necessary provisions outlined in **Part A: Electricity Retailers** or **Part B Metering Providers** of this guideline.

A proposed plan is the document prepared and submitted by an electricity retailer or a metering provider to the Secretary. The document submitted is considered a proposed plan until the Secretary has made a determination to receive or refuse the plan.

When an applicant submits a proposed plan, the Secretary will send an email to the applicant to acknowledge that the proposed plan has been received. Note that this acknowledgement email does not constitute confirmation of receipt under Clause 38E(3) of the Regulation.

Review of Plans

The Secretary will review each submitted proposed or revised plan in order to determine whether the plan meets the requirements of the Regulation and the respective guideline.

Before making a determination regarding the receipt of a proposed or revised plan, the Secretary may request additional information from the applicant.

Determining Plans

The Secretary will endeavour to notify the applicant in writing of the outcome of the review within 20 business days of the proposed plan being submitted. If an application is refused, the Secretary will provide written reasons for the refusal. If an electricity retailer or metering provider does not receive an outcome within 2 months of when the proposed plan was provided to the Secretary, then the Secretary is taken to have refused the plan.

Part A: Electricity Retailers

Safety Management and Customer Procedures Guidelines for remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation of electricity supply of small customer premises

An electricity retailer's proposed or revised plan must make provision for:

1. Safety and risk assessment

The plan must include all details of the electricity retailer's safety and risk assessment for the remote de-energisation or remote re-energisation of premises, including the terms and measures that the retailer undertakes to communicate to the customer to ensure that the customer understands the process to be undertaken.

Retailers and metering providers may collaborate to develop a safety and risk assessment.

2. Mitigation strategy

The plan is to include details of strategy to be adopted to mitigate all risks identified by the safety and risk assessment.

3. Timeframes

The plan must identify the anticipated time that it would take for the electricity retailer to notify the metering provider on the day of remote de-energisation or remote re-energisation.

- For a remote de-energisation request, this timeframe will be from the time the customer arranges, or is informed of a de-energisation, to be undertaken and the request is provided to the metering provider.
- For a remote re-energisation, this timeframe will be the time from the final communication with the customer, on the day of re-energisation, to ensure that the electrical installation is safe to re-energise and the request supplied to the metering provider for the carrying out of the remote re-energisation.
- If the electricity retailer receives a request for a re-energisation to be conducted more than 48 hours from the time of the request, to meet the above requirement, the customer must be contacted on the date of the remote re-energisation to reconfirm that the condition of the electrical installation has not altered since the initial electrical check had been undertaken. If notified that the electrical installation has been altered, remote re-energisation is not to proceed until the safety of the electrical installation can be confirmed.

4. Required procedures

The plan must outline the procedures the electricity retailer will undertake to ensure that the remote de-energisation or remote re-energisation of premises can be safely carried out.

The plan must include an outline of the processes to be undertaken by, or relevant to (where necessary):

- call centre staff;
- digital communication staff;
- direction to website information;
- forms to be utilised;
- communications;
- checks to be observed;
- documentation required;
- notifying the relevant metering provider about the request;
- noting any timeframes specified in the *Electricity Supply (General) Regulation 2014*; and
- any other party or process relevant to carry out the remote re-energisation or remote de-energisation.

The plan must include an outline of the process to obtain any required documents and supply them to the metering provider. Documentation that may be required from a customer includes:

- A Certificate of Compliance – Electrical Work (CCEW) form, if electrical work has been undertaken since de-energisation, and
- a Remote Re-energisation Safety Statement completed within the previous 5 business days, if a premises has been de-energised for 6 months or longer.

5. Information to customers

The information to be provided to a customer about the process for remote de-energisation or remote re-energisation of the customer's premises must include:

- Notices to customers explaining steps required for remote re-energisation;
- Information on the electricity retailer's website, including how to contact the electricity retailer; and
- Other modes of communication e.g. digital means: live chat, App, email, SMS/text.

6. Scripts

Electricity retailers must have scripts and processes in place when communicating with a customer in relation to the remote de-energisation or remote re-energisation of the customer's premises (including actions to be taken by the electricity retailer as a result of the customer's responses).

Remote de-energisation scripts must include:

- Reference to the National Energy Retail Rules which outlines that customers with life support cannot be disconnected unless requested by the customer.
- A request for an assurance from the customer that no life support equipment is present
- Any other hazards or dangers which may be problematic or otherwise exposed by de-energisation, e.g. lift on site being impacted, exit devices not operating, etc.

Remote re-energisation script details must include the following:

- Ensure the customer, or somebody lawfully authorised to act on their behalf, is at premises whilst providing answers to questions.
- How to ensure the customer, or somebody lawfully authorised to act on their behalf, understands the basic parts of the electrical installation including location of meter box/switchboard and possibility of alternate supplies (for example; solar, batteries).
- Questions given to the customer to ascertain if electrical work has been undertaken.
- Questions given to the customer to ascertain if all electrical appliances and equipment is in place and no exposed electrical wiring.

- Questions given to customer to ascertain if electrical work will be undertaken between the time of the script and re-energisation occurring.
- Questions given to customer to ascertain if all electrical appliances are turned off.
- If required by metering provider, ascertain if main switch(es) are turned off.
- Actions taken dependent of responses provided to questions.
- Assurance from the customer as to whether any life support equipment is in use at the premises and appropriate controls to ensure it is safely re-energised.

7. Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process

The plan must include information about how customers can make a complaint and access dispute resolution in the event of any concerns. This can be the same as required under the *National Electrical Rules* and *National Energy Retail Rules*.

The plan must also include an outline as to how the complaint and dispute resolution process information will be provided to the customer.

8. Self-Reporting and Non-Compliance

The electricity retailer is required to monitor and assess their compliance with the Regulation, guidelines and its plan. The Secretary may, at any time, request and be provided within 5 business days, with a report which provides details of the assessments undertaken.

9. Additional Details

The Plan is to include the following additional information:

- Title: Safety Management and Customer Procedures Plan,
- Company name, trading name and Australian Business Number, and
- Contact details for the organisation and the designated contact person.

Part B: Metering Providers

Safety Management and Technical Procedures Guidelines for remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation of electricity supply of small customer premises

A metering provider's proposed or revised Safety Management and Technical Procedures Plan must make provision for:

1. Safety and Risk Assessment

The plan must include a safety and risk assessment completed by the metering provider which details any associated risks with the utilisation of the meter and metering technology. This assessment must also include assessments of risks with a technician attending the customer's premises due to the remote de-energisation or re-energisation not operating correctly.

Retailers and metering providers may collaborate to develop a safety and risk assessment.

2. Mitigation Strategy

The plan must include details of the mitigation strategy for all risks identified in the risk assessment.

The plan must include details of the mitigation strategy for any risks identified, and passed on, by the electricity retailer.

3. Timeframes

The plan must identify the anticipated timeframe it would take for a meter provider to remotely de-energise or re-energise a premises after the request has been received from a retailer, taking into account the maximum timeframes specified in the *Electricity Supply (General) Regulation 2014*.

The timeframe must include:

- Receipt of request and/or service order,

- obtain and review documentation (CCEW or Remote Re-energisation Safety Statement), if required, and
- conducting of function of remote de-energisation or remote re-energisation.

4. Required Procedures

The plan must outline the procedures that metering providers will undertake to ensure that remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation is conducted safely. The plan must also include the procedures to be taken if remote de-energisation or remote re-energisation is not undertaken successfully.

The plan must also include an outline of the process the metering provider undertakes to review any required documents received from the electricity retailer and check that this document indicates that it is safe to remotely re-energise the premises.

Documentation that an electricity retailer may provide on behalf of the customer includes:

- A CCEW if electrical work has been undertaken since de-energisation, and
- a Remote Re-energisation Safety Statement completed within the previous 5 business days, if premises has been de-energised for more than 6 months.

The plan must also include any additional steps that the metering provider may take to ensure the safety of the electrical installation whilst undertaking remote de-energisation or remote re-energisation of the premises.

5. Reporting

Metering providers with a plan must submit a report to Fair Trading on a monthly basis. This report is to include the following details:

- Number of remote de-energisation requests received.
- Number of remote de-energisation requests successfully undertaken.
- Number of remote de-energisation requests not successfully undertaken and summary of issues.
- Number of remote re-energisation requests received.
- Number of remote re-energisation requests successfully undertaken.
- Number of remote re-energisation requests not successfully undertaken and summary of issues.
- Number of complaints received.
- Number of notified incidents.

The report must be prepared in a format determined by the Secretary and submitted to the Secretary, by emailing to advancedmeter@customerservice.nsw.gov.au, no later than the close of business on the 10th business day after the end of the reporting month.

6. Self-Reporting and Non-Compliance

The metering provider is required to monitor and assess their compliance with the Regulation, guidelines, its plan and the *Electricity Supply (General) Regulation 2018*. The Secretary may, at any time, request and be provided within 5 business days with a report which provides details of the assessments undertaken.

7. Additional Details

The plan must include the following additional information:

- Title: Safety Management and Technical Procedures Plan,
- Company name, trading name and Australian Business Number, and
- Contact details of the designated person.

Procedure for Submitting Plan

Submitting the plan

An applicant's proposed or revised plan and business contact details should be submitted by email to advancedmeter@customerservice.nsw.gov.au

The Secretary will direct all communications relating to the plan, including if the plan is received, to a designated contact person. When submitting the plan, please provide, for the designated contact person:

- Name,
- position title,
- email address,
- work phone number, and
- postal and office address.

The electricity retailer or metering provider is, within 15 business days, to inform the Secretary if their designated contact person changes and provide the details of the new designated contact person.

Secretary's receipt or refusal of the plan

The Secretary will review each plan and make a determination as to whether or not to receive or refuse the plan for the purpose of cl 38E of the Regulation.

Applicants will be notified in writing whether their plan has been formally received. If a plan is not received, the Secretary will provide written reasons, identifying the issues or matters which were not included in the plan. It is up to the electricity retailer or metering provider to submit a plan again.

Duration of a plan

A plan, once received by the Secretary, expires after 2 years after the day on which it takes effect, unless otherwise terminated earlier by the Secretary.

The Secretary may conduct an audit of any received plan. An audit may commence upon the receipt of a complaint or in relation to a notification of an incident.

A list of retailers and metering providers who have had their plans received will be published on the NSW Fair Trading website.

When can a plan be revised?

A plan may be revised if:

- these guidelines are amended while the plan is in force; or
- the Secretary audits the plan and requires the electricity retailer or metering provider to submit a revised plan; or
- an electricity retailer or metering provider wishes to make changes to their received plan.

If the guidelines are amended while the plan is in force, the electricity retailer or metering provider will receive written notice requiring them to submit a revised plan. If the electricity retailer or metering provider does not submit a revised plan within 10 business days after notice (or longer period specified by the Secretary), their plan is terminated. If the Secretary receives the revised plan, that plan replaces the plan that was in force immediately before the revised plan was submitted and remains in force until the plan it replaced expires.

If the plan is audited by the Secretary, and the Secretary determines that the plan does not make satisfactory provision for the safe remote de-energisation or remote re-energisation of premises or for one or more of the matters in cl 38E(2), the Secretary will notify the retailer or metering provider that they require them to submit a revised plan. The Secretary will specify the issues identified in the audit. If a revised plan is not submitted within 10 days (or the period specified by the Secretary), the plan is terminated.

When the revised plan is submitted to the Secretary following an audit or changes made to an existing plan by the electricity retailer or metering provider, the Secretary will determine whether to accept the revised plan or reject the revised plan. If the plan is rejected, electricity retailers and metering providers will be notified and have the opportunity to submit a subsequent revised plan.

Glossary of Terms

Words and expressions used in these guidelines have the same meaning as they have in the *Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Regulation 2018*

CCEW	Certificate of Compliance – Electrical Work form – the notice given to the owner or the owner’s agent under clause 37 of the Regulation
Notified Incidents	Incidents to be notified include: (a) Incorrect premises remotely de-energised and/or re-energised, (b) Electric shocks or possible electric shocks due to remote re-energisation, (c) Fires or possible fires due to remote re-energisation, (d) Any other incident as determined by the Secretary
NSW Fair Trading	NSW Fair Trading, part of the Better Regulation Division, Department of Customer Service
Metering Provider	Has the same meaning as it has in the National Electricity Rules
Plan or Safety Management Plan	In relation to a: (a) retailer means a safety management and customer procedures plan for the remote de-energisation and re-energisation of electricity supply of a premises (b) metering provider means a safety management and technical procedures plan for the remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation of electricity supply of a premises
Premises	Premises of a small customer.
Re-energisation Safety Statement	Means a re-energisation safety statement completed by a qualified person under the Regulation
Regulation	<i>Gas and Electricity (Consumer Safety) Regulation 2018</i>
Remote de-energisation	The de-energisation of electricity supply of premises from a place other than the premises concerned using an electricity meter
Remote re-energisation	The re-energisation of electricity supply of premises from a place other than the premises concerned using an electricity meter
Retailer	Has the same meaning as it has in the National Energy Retail Law (NSW)
Secretary	The Secretary of the Department of Customer Service or their delegated officer