



ETU OHS NEWSLETTER

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CORRECT MAINTENANCE AND INSTALLATION OF LUMINAIRES IN HAZARDOUS AREAS

A recent incident in a mine in New South Wales prompted the NSW Department of Primary Industries to issue a safety alert about the correct installation, inspection and maintenance of luminaires in certified hazardous areas.

The alert highlighted three factors concerning the plug of the device which contributed to an electrical shock being received from the outside surface of the luminaire:

- an internal "O" ring seal was missing
- a cracked flame path collar
- unearthed gland

The faulty equipment could also have caused ignition had flammable and explosive gases been present in the mine. The recommendations arising from the investigation of the incident could be applicable to other light fittings and other hazardous area installations. They include:

The training and competence

requirements of persons responsible for maintenance of the light fitting to include:

- preventing incorrect assembly
- identifying cracks in the flame-proof assembly
- ensuring adequate earthing
- the inspection, testing and maintenance of all electrical equipment to include the checking of the integrity of earthing of exposed metal parts by earth continuity testing
- manufacturers of light fittings and end users should also review the risks to safety from their products and to promptly stipulate earthing, protection, maintenance and inspection requirements to their customers

These recommendations highlight the importance of proper and ongoing regular maintenance and inspection of this equipment of this type

in hazardous area.

For the full article go to: http://www.minerals.nsw.gov.au/_data/page/1851/ElectricShockFinal_SA05-12.pdf

Metal inserts were not earthed (top), and the outer case collar was cracked (bottom), see photos below :



OHS Reps Meetings 2006
10am—12pm

22nd February - Melbourne
29th March—ETU Geelong
26th April—Melbourne
31st May—ETU Morwell
28th June—Melbourne
26th July—Trades and Labour
Portland
30th August—Melbourne
27th Sept—Trades and Labour
Shepparton
25th October—Melbourne
29th November—ETU Geelong
December tbc—Melbourne

PRODUCT RECALL— SCHNEIDER RCD

Schneider Electric (Australia) has recalled Residual Current Devices (RCDs), also called safety switches, sold under the brand names Merlin Gerin and Square D. The protective devices may be faulty and fail to operate as designed when an earth leakage fault is detected.

Applies only to devices with a manufacturing date code from 20031215 to 20040630.

Merlin Gerin part numbers: 26858, 26859, 26860 and 26861. Square D part numbers: QOE110B03, QOE116B03, QOE120B03, QOE132B03, QOE140B03, QOE120C03 and QOE132C03.

Defect Details: The circuit breaker may fail to open as designed when an earth leakage fault is detected.



CONSULTATION—NOT A NEW PROVISION

WorkSafe have been promoting the new provisions in the OHS Act 2004 in relation to consultation.

Sections 35 and 36 come into force on the 1st January 2006. The Act requires that employers consult with employees, OHS Reps and independent contractors and their employees. The requirement to consult with OHS Reps was in the 1985 Act and as such is not a new requirement.

WorkSafe have determined by utilising the provisions of the Act that consultation is a two-way conversation between employers

and employees that involves:

- Sharing information (information must be made available in a timely way and in a form that can be understood by employees)
- Giving employees a reasonable opportunity to express their views (they should be encouraged to play a part in the problem-solving process)
- Taking those views into account (employees should help to shape decisions, not

hear about them after they have been made).

Employers must consult with their employees when deciding on the procedures to:

- Consult with employees on health and safety
- Resolve health and safety issues
- Monitor employees' health and workplace conditions
- Provide information and training
- Identifying or assessing hazards or risks and making decisions on how to control

them

- Deciding about facilities for employee welfare (eg. dining facilities, change rooms, toilets, first aid, etc.).
- Determining the membership of any health and safety committee
- Proposing physical changes to the workplace, things used in the workplace, or even changes to the work itself, that may affect health and safety.

For further information on consultation see WorkSafe's web site.

INTERNAL REVIEW OF INSPECTORS DECISIONS

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and the *Dangerous Goods and Equipment (Public Safety) Acts (Amendment) Act 2005* provide for review of inspectors' **decisions or non-decisions** by an internal review process upon application by an eligible person. This supports WorkSafe's aims to transform into a more transparent and accountable regulator.

The Internal Review Unit has been established by the

Authority to manage the internal review process as an accessible, timely and transparent system. Internal review will improve the Authority's decision making processes and provide external stakeholders with greater confidence in its reviewable decisions.

Internal review looks at the specific reviewable decisions - it is not concerned with conduct complaints or broader

occupational health and safety matters.

The persons who can request a reviewable decision, and those sections of the Act that can have the scrutiny of reviewable decision, are specified in Section 127 of the OHS Act. The person must be affected by the **decision or non-decision** of the inspector for the decision to be reviewable.

If you are not satisfied with a decision made by the Internal Review Officer, or the Internal

Review Officer fails to make a decision, you have the right to apply to the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) for external review of the Internal Review Officer's decision. Usually, an application to VCAT must be made within 14 days from the date you are aware of the Internal Review decision.

For more information go to the web page below.

<http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au/vwa/home.nsf/pages/internalreview>

MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS—MSDS

An MSDS is a document that describes the hazardous substances and provides vital information to assist people in the safe use of the substances.

A manufacturer or supplier of hazardous substances are required to prepare a material safety data sheet (MSDS) for all hazardous substances that they manufacture or import into Victoria. They also need to ensure

that hazardous substances that they supply are accompanied by a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) which provides the receiver with information necessary for the use of the hazardous substance.

An employer is required to obtain from the manufacturer or supplier the current version of the MSDS

for all hazardous substances that they hold on the premises. The MSDS must be readily accessible to all employees, and other persons on the premises.

The MSDS must not be more than 5 years old and employees who are required to use the hazardous substance must be suitably instructed and trained in the

safe use of the product.

Even though a product may have been used in the workplace for many years does not necessarily mean that the product has, or is being used safely. Some substances can have a long latency period (time from exposure to onset of symptoms). Read the MSDS and follow the precautions before it's too late.