



To all Registered Electrical Contractors

Many industry changes have occurred since our last "Tech Talk" was sent to you in April.

Specifications for overhead service cables have been consolidated and are included in Service & Installation Rule amendments currently being sent to all RECs. Effectively, many installations will now need to be supplied underground as the increased clearances for overhead service cables will not be achievable.

Other changes include the sale of the Powercor Retail Business and Meter Board Contactor policy, the Cost of Pits and Substation Upgrades, and revised Standard Service Charge and Connection Contact Lists. Articles on these and the Contestable Customers Connection Process, Notification of Electrical Work and Service Fuse Removal & Reinsertion are included.

I trust that you and your employees will find this information useful, as its correct application will assist in the provision of industry best service to our mutual customers.

Ken Greenway
CONNECTION STANDARDS MANAGER

POWERCOR SELLS RETAIL BUSINESS

The sale of the Powercor Australia retail business to Origin Energy was completed on 1 June 2001. Origin Energy is an Australian owned energy company retailing electricity and gas throughout Australia, New Zealand and the near Pacific.

This means that Origin Energy now sells electricity to all franchised (non-contestable) customers in the Powercor area of supply. Origin Energy also competes with other retailers for the sale of electricity to contestable customers.

Powercor will now focus on its core business of transporting electricity purchased by retailers and sold to customers connected to the Powercor electricity network. Customer service and reliability of supply will continue to be key Powercor objectives.

CONTESTABLE CUSTOMERS CONNECTION PROCESS

As advised in earlier editions of “Tech Talk”, to avoid connection delays it is important for contestable customers to select their retailer in time for their meters to be installed prior to the required connection time.

This is necessary as the retailer must arrange for the installation of metering, and Powercor cannot connect the installation until the meters are installed. Connection delays are unavoidable in circumstances where the customer has not selected their retailer in time for meters to be installed by the required connection date.

Customers may select a retailer of their choice from the list available on the Office of the Regulator General web site www.reggen.vic.gov.au.

If customers are not certain of their contestable status they should contact Powercor New Connections on 1300 360 410 for advice.

The following table should assist RECs in determining their customer’s contestability status. It is anticipated that all customers will be contestable from January 2002.

Customer Consumption (per annum)	Meter Type	Meter Installer	Customer Contestability Status	Customer action prior to connection
Typical consumption in excess of 160MWH and typical account in excess of \$20k	Some High Voltage Majority - Low Voltage Current Transformer (CT)	Retailer appointed Meter Provider	Fully Contestable Tier 1 Customer (selects host retailer) Tier 2 Customer (selects other than host retailer)	Contact Retailer regarding contestability and metering Contact Powercor regarding supply availability and connection
Typical consumption in excess of 40MWH and typical account between \$5k and \$20k	Majority - Low Voltage Current Transformer (CT) Some Direct Metered	Retailer appointed Meter Provider for remotely read meters and Powercor for manually read meters		
Typical consumption less than 40MWH and typical account below \$5k	Some Low Voltage Current Transformer (CT) Majority direct metered	Powercor has sole responsibility until January 2002, and will continue after this date when nominated by the retailer.	Currently franchised Contestable from 1 January 2002	Contact Powercor regarding supply availability and connection

NOTIFICATION OF ELECTRICAL WORK

RECS are reminded that notification of all electrical work requiring Powercor involvement must be submitted in an approved manner, and that failure to do so may result in connection delays or refusal to connect the work. Please note the following notification must be correctly completed and submitted to ensure the best service to our mutual customers:

Supply - An Electrical Work Advice (EWA) should be submitted to Powercor New Connections at the earliest opportunity where supply is known or suspected not to be available, and where a pit or substantial load increase is proposed.

The correctly completed form should be sent to New Connections Facsimile 1800 062 242 or posted to Powercor New Connections, PO Box 185 Geelong 3220.

New Connections And Truck Appointments

- a) An **Electrical Work Request (EWR)** must be provided for all new connections work and truck appointments. This should be submitted to Powercor New Connections at least 5 working days prior to the required work date and in the same manner as the EWA
- b) The “**Electricity Supplier Copy**” of the **Certificate of Safety (CES)** must be provided for all new connections and truck appointments involving prescribed work. These may be submitted to New Connections with the EWR or provided to Powercor personnel on site. If the CES was not received with the EWR and is not provided on site, connection work will not take place and a wasted truck visit will be charged.

Fault Work - Fault work may be advised to Powercor on 1300 360 410. Powercor personnel will not reconnect supply unless a correctly completed **Electrical Work Request (EWR)** is received on site prior to the connection.

SERVICE & INSTALLATION RULES - JULY 2001 AMENDMENTS

The December 1999 (Green Cover) edition of the Victorian Service & Installation Rules has been amended. Amendments to Clause 5.5. are due to increased service cable height requirements being specified by the Electricity Safety (Network Assets) Regulations, changes to Page AS-5 have resulted from Powercor Australia selling their retail business, and new TXU metering arrangements have resulted in the new Appendix G.

The amended pages are identified on the page footer as “*Victorian Service & Installation Rules - December 1999 amended July 2001*”

Copies of these amendments have been sent to all Registered Electrical Contractors (RECs). These may be copied, and the amendments may be down loaded from the Powercor Australia Ltd web site www.powercor.com.au.

The amendments will be contained in newly printed copies of the Service & Installation Rules. These are available from Information Victoria (1300 366 356), Electrical Contractor and Inspection organisations, and most Electrical Wholesalers.

Overhead Service Cables - Amended Clause 5.5

Importantly, RECs and electricians should be aware of the changes to Clause 5.5, as the amendment details and expands on previous “Tech Talk” advice.

Minimum heights for overhead service cables over driveways have increased to 4600mm, and this height must also be achieved and maintained over any ground traversable by vehicles. Contrary to earlier advice, ground traversable by vehicles now includes domestic front lawns and gardens where a vehicle may enter or cross these areas without impediment.

Minimum heights for the POA have increased to 3100mm, though this height will not be sufficient in the majority of cases due to the 4600mm requirement where ground can be traversed by a vehicle. In accordance with past practice, any new customer and any customer performing alterations to existing installations that cause the service cable to be replaced, must provide a point of attachment that enables the service cable to achieve and maintain the required clearances. To assist this and where agreed, Powercor may provide a mid span service or service pole at the customer’s cost. Where these arrangements do not enable clearances to be met or maintained, the line must be placed underground at the customer’s cost.

Powercor will arrange with the customer for clearances to be met by existing service cables that are replaced in circumstances other than by works initiated by the customer.

The amendment contains new information on service cable sag measurements and behaviour, a guide to determine suitable service cable routes and industry agreed specifications for extra height brackets. Commercially available brackets must be accepted for use prior to being marketed, and brackets must be safe to work on by a person using a portable extension ladder.

RECs should ensure all employees are aware of these changes. In many instances the necessary clearances will not be reasonably achievable and the service line to the premises will have to be placed underground. Therefore it is essential to determine anticipated servicing methods as early as possible. If advice is required, please contact the personnel listed in the connection advice section at the rear of this document.

SERVICE FUSE REMOVAL & REINSERTION

Although the industry code of practice for the removal and reinsertion of service fuses has created benefits for electricians and our mutual customers, reports of mis-use of service fuses continue.

The code enables any competent “Electrician” and “L” or “G” Inspector licence holder to remove and reinsert service fuses to any direct metered single occupancy supplied from a dedicated service cable where it has a maximum demand of 100 A or less. The typical process is:

1. Obtain permission of customer and any affected occupant
2. Notify Powercor
3. Install notices, shed load (turn off main switches), remove service fuse and test

4. Perform work
5. Test, reinsert service fuse, test and re-seal fuse
6. Advise customer and any affected occupant
7. Inform Powercor
8. Record work details

The code does not permit the insertion of fuses that are removed by others. To work outside the code or to interfere with Powercor metering or assets other than the service fuse will generally be a breach of industry regulations. Action will be taken where this is detected.

METER BOARD CONTACTORS

Prior to 1981 the SEC installed contactors on meter boards as part of their metering equipment to assist the switching of floor heating loads.

Since 1981 the SEC and subsequent Powercor policy has been for new customers to switch all loads in excess of 30 Amp single phase, thus eliminating the need for meter board contactors.

There has also been a policy to pay electricians for the cost of upgrading existing customers installations to the new standard where this enabled removal of meter board contactors, and where they had obtained permission to perform the work.

This latter policy has now been withdrawn, as in many cases electricians upgraded customer installations at an extremely high cost to Powercor and without permission.

Where a faulty meter board contactor (or any other Powercor equipment) is identified, the fault should be reported to Powercor on the Service Difficulties and Faults number 13 24 12.

Powercor will no longer accept responsibility and accounts for work that has not been authorised prior to the work being performed.

COST CHANGES FOR PITS AND SUBSTATION UPGRADES.

Since the last version of Tech Talk major changes have occurred to Powercor connection policies and the costs for customer work. These changes have occurred as a result of new guidelines issued by the Office of the Regulator General.

Of particular note for RECs and Consultants are the changes to the funding arrangements where customers may now be required to pay the full cost of installing underground service pits, as well as for substation upgrades.

Your clients should therefore be advised to contact Powercor to obtain costs and conditions before proceeding with new installations or load increases. This is particularly important for large loads such as underfloor heating, three phase connections, dairy upgrades, etc, as these costs can be significant.

If you have any questions regarding the new policies and how the changes may affect your jobs please contact a Customer Connections Adviser at the nearest Powercor office.

STANDARD SERVICE PRICES (FIXED CHARGES)

Attached is an updated list of Powercor's Standard Service Prices. This updated list contains an explanatory note about the price for Elective Underground pits that was inadvertently omitted from the list included in the last edition of Tech Talk. The note advises that the elective pit price does not include the cost of cable, conduit, civil works, or reinstatement works. These additional costs are available on request.

A copy of Powercor's Standard Service Prices is available on our web site at <http://www.powercor.com.au/> listed under "Tariffs".

Standard Services Prices	Normal Hours GST Inclusive	After Hours GST Inclusive
Connection		
New Connection - Residential*	\$ 186.69	\$ 362.69
New Premises - Non Residential	\$ 274.57	\$ 395.57
Existing Premises - Reconnection	\$ 21.97	\$ 159.47
Existing Premises - Customer Transfer	\$ 21.97	\$ 159.47
*Also applies to a Builders Supply Permanent Domestic Location (Partial Supply) and any Builders Supply Pole		
Field Office visits		
Collect Overdue Accounts	\$ 21.98	NA
Reconnect After Disconnection for Non Payment	\$ 49.44	\$ 159.45
Adjust Time Switch - Tariff Charge	\$ 21.97	NA
Fuse Removal/Insertion for Electrical Contractor Per Visit	\$ 21.97	\$ 159.47
Special Meter Reading	\$ 21.97	\$ 159.47
Underground Cable Location	\$ 60.42	\$ 296.92
Service Truck Visit		
Planned Work and Unplanned Work for faults on customer installation	\$ 170.20	\$ 340.70
Service Truck Visit - wasted visit	\$ 142.75	\$ 142.75
Low Voltage Meter Conversion		
Low Voltage Meter Conversion - To Winner (new installation)	\$ 285.99	NA
Low Voltage Meter Conversion - To Winner (existing installation) Domestic	\$ 516.69	\$ 879.69
Low Voltage Meter Conversion - To Time of Use (Existing Installation) Commercial/Farm	\$ 676.13	\$1017.13
Installation of 5 Day Electric Time Switch	\$ 313.24	\$ 362.74

Standard Services Prices (cont'd)	Normal Hours GST Inclusive	After Hours GST Inclusive
Meter Equipment Test		
Single Phase	\$ 170.12	NA
Single Phase - Each Additional Meter	\$ 65.81	NA
Multi-Phase	\$ 252.51	NA
Multi-Phase - Each Additional Meter	\$ 87.73	NA
Provision of Switching Service	\$ 53.55	As Quoted
Provision of Service Fuses - Fuse Switch Disconnecter		
160A 4 Pole	\$ 404.67	As Quoted
400A 3 Pole	\$ 758.87	As Quoted
400A 4 Pole	\$ 885.37	As Quoted
Hinged Fuses: 300A Group of 3	\$ 417.74	As Quoted
Elective Underground Servicing		
Supply up to 100A (Existing Installations)	\$ 572.57*	As Quoted
Supply between 100A-179A (Existing Installations)	\$ 707.83*	As Quoted
* Excludes all civil works, reinstatement, cable and conduit costs.		
Provision of Load Profile		
Provision of Load Profile to CT Metering - Install and provide one Load Profile	\$ 455.70	As Quoted
Provision of Load Profile to CT Metering - For each additional Load Profile	\$ 307.83	As Quoted
Load Profile Print Out from Existing Metering	\$ 75.70	NA
Temporary Cover		
Temporary Cover of LV Mains - 2 Wire Cover	\$ 461.26	\$ 648.26
Temporary Cover of LV Mains - All Wire Cover	\$ 626.02	\$ 879.02
Material Rental for each additional month - 2 Wire Cover	\$ 38.50	NA
Material Rental for each additional month - All Wire Cover	\$ 82.50	NA
Temporary Cover for LV Mains - Service Cable	\$ 296.51	\$ 417.51
Material Rental for each additional month - Service Cable	\$ 9.90	NA
Miscellaneous		
Interest Rate on Security Deposit and Outstanding Electricity Accounts	NA	NA
Dishonoured cheque	\$ 15.39	NA
Dishonoured direct debit	\$ 8.79	NA
Copy of Supply and Sale Code	\$ 2.20	NA
Service Cable pulled down by High Load- Single Phase	\$ 245.80	\$ 377.79
Service Cable pulled down by High Load - Multi Phase	\$ 372.73	\$ 493.73

POWERCOR CONTACTS

Service Difficulties & Faults (24 hour)	13 24 12
General Network Enquiries	13 22 06

New Connections

Phone	1300 360 410
Facsimile	1800 062 242
Post	Powercor New Connections, PO Box 185 Geelong 3220.

Connection Advice

The electrical inspection company Electrical Certification Australia (ECA) is contracted to Powercor to provide advice on connection matters such as the Service & Installation Rules on Powercor's behalf. Please contact the ECA personnel listed if you have any queries on these matters.

Note: A site visit is not normally provided as part of this service. Arrangements may be made by calling New Connections on the number above where you consider an on site visit to be essential. However, any site visit is subject to the New Connection officer's agreement.

Head Office		Geelong	
Roy Sands	03 9747 3488	Steve Harriott	0419 346 399
	0419 871 677	Neville Hewitt	0419 346 397
		John Moloney	0419 346 398
Altona		Mildura	
Greg Carroll	0419 871 835	Bob Spooner	0418 565 100
Ararat		Tony Williams	0418 565 373
Bruce Paton	0418 568 497	Shepparton	
Ballarat		Rod Brown	0419 112 814
Peter McCutcheon	0409 359 093	Gordon Horgon	0419 873 157
Bendigo		Sunshine	
Les Hartland	0408 509 424	Zbigniew Piorkowski	0419 873 804
Lindsay Walkington	0409 709 423	Swan Hill	
Colac		Lindsay Rogers	0418 567 385
Peter Bouchier	0419 543 044	Warrnambool	
Echuca		Wayne Rooke	0419 376 272
Ken Davies	0408 832 370	Werribee	
		Colin Trethowan	0419 871 935