

General Information Notice Electrical Safety & Compliance

Notice Number: GI14_20

24 April 2020

Subject: Extension of Latitude for Refresher Training during COVID-19

Dear ASPs

In December 2018, Ausgrid issued GI35_18 'Provision of a 1-month latitude to statutory training expiry dates'.

That notice informed Accredited Service Providers (ASPs) that utilisation of the 1-month latitude to statutory training expiry dates no longer required prior approval from Ausgrid. Training covered by this latitude was also detailed in the notice. This provision has also since been reflected in our current Electrical Safety Rules.

In response to the current COVID19 pandemic, Ausgrid is aware of several changes either implemented or being considered by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) that currently service the ASP market. Such changes may impact the ability of ASPs to satisfy current annual re-authorisation requirements.

Some noted changes include:

- immediate pause on training delivery until a later date;
- reduced training (knowledge only, but no practical); or
- reduced class sizes to meet social distancing requirements.

Due to these changes, Ausgrid understands training through your preferred supplier may no longer be an option at this time.

We also understand where training is available, that potential delays may be experienced in booking into training. Delays may also be experienced in being able to complete the full training requirements (including face-to-face training) by the reauthorisation expiry date.

As the current COVID-19 situation evolves, it is possible further changes by training providers may be implemented. It is therefore important to remain aware of training provider notifications and to ensure potential delays are considered when booking future training.

Ausgrid has an expectation for companies to make all reasonable attempts to have workers attend refresher training at, or prior to, their authorisation expiry dates. Only where this is not reasonably achievable, then there is leeway for this to be completed during the latitude period.

Given the potential for delays with training availability, **Ausgrid will temporarily extend the current 1-month latitude to 3-months across all required refresher training**, including statutory training.

This change will come into immediate effect and will remain until further notice.

On this basis, Ausgrid will recognise for reauthorisation purposes, completed training up to 3-months following training expiry.

Worker and Employer Responsibilities

Utilisation of the extended latitude period will require both workers and their respective employers to adhere to the following. Failure to do so may result in Ausgrid suspending or cancelling an authorisation.

- a) In accordance with Ausgrid's Network Standard 'ES4 Accredited Service Provider Authorisation', there is a requirement for workers to make all reasonable attempts to complete reauthorisation training by their respective training expiry dates. The extended latitude period should only be used as a fall-back option.

- b) Workers who cannot complete reauthorisation training within the current 1-month latitude period must inform their employer that they have not completed the training and to take steps to complete the training as soon as is reasonable and within the extended latitude period of 3 months.
- c) Workers who are not current with their training by the end of the current 1-month latitude should not act in roles that require this training, particularly safety observers for live work. With regards to live work, where possible, employers should reschedule or redesign the work so that a safety observer or rescuer is not required. If this cannot be reasonably achieved, then electrical work by the worker on or near Ausgrid's electrical network must only be performed in accordance with a documented risk assessment.
- d) Per (c), Risk Assessments must factor in currency of a worker's training. Where a worker's training falls out-of-date and beyond the 1-month latitude, employers and persons completing the risk assessments for the task should consider how long since the worker's training expired, the worker's experience with the required tasks to be performed and the familiarity and confidence that the work team members have in each other. Employers and persons completing the risk assessment must document the competency assessment process undertaken in lieu of recognised training, documenting evidence considered in determining competency, consulting with workers and workers' representatives who will rely on the assessed 'worker' and not proceeding until all parties are satisfied that it is safe to do so.

Employers should inform and remind workers that if they have any concerns regarding their competency or the competency of others, that they should 'Pause' and seek further advice (e.g. Manager / Supervisor) before proceeding.

Please note that this change may be revisited at any time and if this occurs, we will advise accordingly.

With regards to Ausgrid training courses, these continue to be delivered with reduced class sizes to maintain social distancing requirements, and additional hygiene protocols. Due to these changes, some delays in training may be experienced and Ausgrid appreciates your patience during this time.

**Regards,
Electrical Safety & Compliance
Ausgrid**