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THE TELIT

The Titab Cabling Newsletter



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Editorial

During the bush fire crisis we told members that if they had difficulty with their CPR payments to contact us to discuss the matter. That applies also during this period. We also have a list of referral points for assistance and these have been well publicised in the media.

The well-known saying attributed to the Chinese – “We live in interesting times” - is certainly applicable in the current environment of the coronavirus/Covid 19 pandemic. This is probably a one in 100 year event and is having a devastating effect on people and the economies of most nations. As governments of all persuasions across the world scramble to handle this virus, telecommunications again assumes a visible, critical role.

Telecommunications is really a fourth utility, not a nice to have!

In today's environment it is an essential tool to keep society operational, like water, electricity and gas. At last the federal government can see the importance of listing *tele-medicine* as a Medicare service. *Telemedicine* has been promoted for years as a feature of the new broadband age and the technical facilities have been there for years, but funding under the Medicare system has never been addressed, until now. This will enable remote diagnostics - within some limits - and save people having to come to clinics with all the ramifications of distance travelling in regional areas and the cross infection that clinic attendance can bring.

Those who can work from home are encouraged to do so and this highlights the need for a good, reliable core telecommunications network and fast broadband. Telcos, RSPs and the NBN have all scrambled to expand capacity wherever possible and NBN have increased the amount of data available to the RSP's by around 40% at cheaper rates.

Home teleworking and facilitating business activity with telecommunications is obvious, but the other role, in plain language, can be equally important in periods like this of relative isolation ie. to keep people mentally balanced and maintaining some contact with their peers and relatives. Humans are “flock” creatures who need the company of others and telecommunications will play a major role in society over this critical period, of at least the next six months.

The virus has also highlighted the need for more manufacturing and more call centre independence in Australia. Many supply lines have been critically affected by the Chinese shutdown and some call centres have been shut down; in the Philippines for example.

In the recent past Australia had the capability to produce a full range of telecommunications network, customer premises, satellite and broadband equipment. Even the Menzies Conservative coalition government, had an industry plan that enabled Ericsson's to be a major supplier of network equipment and a number of other companies to also manufacture here, under license.

There is wide concern in the community as reflected in panic buying and other selfish behaviour. But the Australian public can be assured that their telecommunications network will continue to serve them and our cabling of course will play an important, but little recognised role.

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Improved results as telco complaints decline

New figures released by the ACMA show telcos are receiving fewer complaints about their services.

Data shows they received around 283,000 complaints in the 2019 December quarter, a decline of nearly 26% compared to the same quarter in 2018.

NBN broadband complaints were down by over 36%, with 126 complaints per 10,000 services.

Our interactive telco complaints dashboard details complaints during the 2019 September and December quarters from the top and mid-tier telcos, excluding Optus.

TCA1 Compliance Forms-Reminder to use

Despite many reminders, some cablers still do not provide customers with the ACMA TCA1 Compliance Form. These are mandatory for all cabling work except for a couple of very minor replacement actions, as defined by ACMA. (i.e replacing damaged socket/ jumpers/records). New versions are now clearly labelled as Compliance Forms and are just as essential as compliance forms for other utilities.

The Cabling Provider Rules (CPR) specify their use on the ACMA Website and in Appendix C of the ACMA Pathways to ACMA Cabling Provider Rules - Cabling Registration. Cablers must abide by "Tech Standard 9 - the Wiring Rules" and issue a TCA1 to certify the installation is compliant. This is also protection for the cabler, in case someone does non-compliant work later.

A TCA2 (non -mandatory) can also be issued to indicate poor legacy cabling and this is a safeguard for the good guys. The TITAB National Office can provide, at cost, made-up TCA1 pads with duplicate "carbonated" copies. A TCA1 can also be incorporated into an Invoice format. TCA1 Forms are also on the ACMA website for downloading.

As we have advised in the past, there can be litigation or insurance issues with non-compliance when commercial disagreements arise and it pays to do it right at the outset!



Crossing over to cabling without the risk

(Article reproduced from Electrical Connection magazine)

The registrars are receiving more enquiries from electricians who are wanting to diversify their skills and include cabling into their business. This is to take advantage of the growing trend to Smart Wiring and cabling projects associated with the nbn.

Becoming a registered Open cabler allows an electrician to work legally as an ACMA accredited cabler. This means being able to cross over into the telecommunications cabling industry with permission to install, modify and repair phone and data cables, data points, patch panels and other devices within residential and commercial areas.

For example, only registered cablers can perform in-home cabling work for a home or business owner connecting to the nbn access network.

Regardless of the size or scale of cabling involved in the project, it's important for contractors to be aware that any unregistered cabling work that is faulty or results in an incident, is not covered by business insurance-a risk not worth taking.

Crossing over to cabling is a fairly straight forward process for any licensed electrician. Just simply complete the relevant ACMA pathways training through a registered training organization.



Don't let your registration expire!

If you are uncertain of your expiry date you can check details on the TITAB website at www.titab.com.au

TITAB notifies cablers of their registration renewal approximately 6 weeks before their expiry date. It is therefore important that we have current addresses and contact points.

If you want to have your registration renewed in a timely manner please notify our office of any changes to your address, email or phone numbers. There have been occasions where cablers have had their employment jeopardized because they are unregistered.

By updating any changes you won't miss out on our newsletters, which have the latest industry news. You can update your details via phone on 03 9631 0800 or by email at: info@titab.com.au.

Tradie financials around COVID-19

(This article was written by Sean Carroll of the Electrical Connection magazine)

Delays in crucial supply chains and financial uncertainty is causing lengthy hold-ups on building projects which puts tradies at risk of job losses and non-payments as COVID-19 takes its hold on the building industry.

“With delays of three-to-four weeks on many supplies coming from countries struck-down by COVID-19, there are an increasing number of commercial building projects in slow-down and uncertainty over some projects even going ahead,” Contractors Debt Recovery managing director Anthony Igra explains.

“This is placing a huge strain on construction contractors, many of whom are small-to-medium-businesses or sole-traders who pay for supplies up front, and are left out of pocket with mortgages to pay and families to feed. The likelihood is that many contracts will be terminated and many contractors just won’t get paid,”

Anthony mentions that over \$3 billion of construction work was left unpaid last year due to building companies simply refusing to pay or purposely going into voluntary liquidation to avoid paying up and then phoenixing, restarting the business under a new name.

“With major income losses such as this during a ‘normal’ year, the financial impact of COVID-19 is set to hurt trade contractors who rely on building and construction contracts to keep their businesses and families afloat,” he says.

Anthony likens it to past events where tradies were hit hard like the Queensland floods in 2019 where one of his clients was left unpaid \$181,000. On top of the bushfires at the start of the year, it’s likely that a lot of tradies will go under.

Since the pandemic began, Anthony says that many tradies have called his office wanting advice on how to chase down non-payments in case they’re unable to work.

“Many of these payments are up to a year old but contractors haven’t chased them down because they don’t want to incur expensive legal fees. That’s where the Security of Payment Act comes in. It’s effective and affordable but many just don’t know about it,” he says.

Through that act, Anthony and his team were able to uncover more than \$6 million in unpaid work which let his clients pay bills and get on with their trade.

“The financial impact of COVID-19 is set to hurt trade contractors”

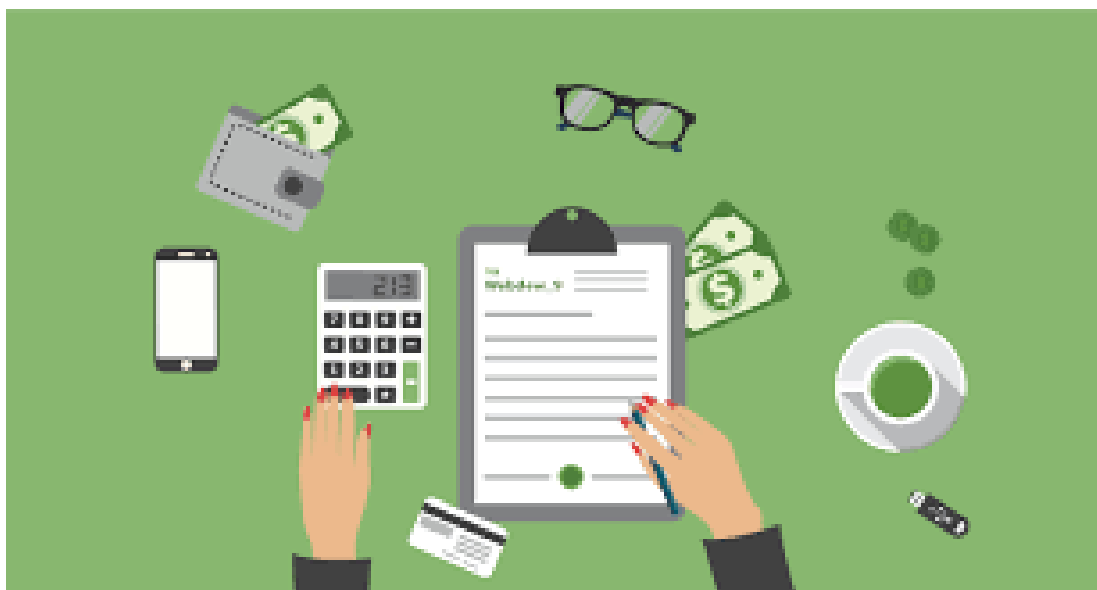
“The most important piece of advice I can give to tradesmen right now, is to make sure you chase the monies owed to you and chase it hard and early. In these uncertain times, not only is cash king, but cash today is more important than ever.”

Specialist Competencies-Have you upgraded?

If a cabler undertakes underground, aerial, broadband, structured, optical fibre or co-axial cabling work they must have the training competencies relevant to this specialised cabling work.

There are still a lot of cablers that have not upgraded their registration and are legally obliged to do so. If this applies to you, please refer to the TITAB website for a list of training providers that can offer the training.

Once you have done the training ensure you notify TITAB so your registration can be updated.



New Workplace Manslaughter Laws-Are you Protected?

Victoria follows other states with the introduction of new workplace laws and penalties.

On 26th November 2019 Victorian Parliament passed the Workplace Safety Legislation Amendment (Workplace Manslaughter and other matters) Bill 2019 introducing new workplace manslaughter laws.

This new law is quite broad in its scope and has the potential to find employers, organisations and its senior officers responsible for workplace deaths.

According to a media release by the Hon Jill Hennessy (Minister for Workplace Safety), "Too many Victorians have had their lives tragically cut short after simply going to work and this new offence will hold employers who don't put safety first to account."

Currently Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia and Victoria have introduced workplace manslaughter offences. Time will tell how soon it will be before all the other states follow suit.

Since its introduction in 2018 in Queensland there has been one recorded prosecution for workplace manslaughter against a Brisbane recycling company in October 2019. Proof that the authorities are willing to carry through with prosecutions when required.

When will workplace manslaughter offences come into effect in Victoria?

According to a Worksafe Victoria news release, it is

expected that this law will come into effect by 1 July 2020.

What penalties can be applied?

A maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment for individuals with a maximum fine of \$16.5 million for companies. There is also ability within the offence for direct liability of an organisation to be charged, without determining individual fault.

Who and what is covered by the offence?

The death of employees, contractors and members of the public (bystanders) are all covered. Workplace manslaughter can even be charged if a person's death occurs sometime after the relevant incident.

What is negligent conduct?

Worksafe Victoria defines negligent conduct as, when a person:

does not adequately manage, control or supervise its employees

does not take reasonable action to fix a dangerous situation, in circumstances where failing to do so causes a high risk of death, serious injury or serious illness

What can you do to ensure you are protected?

Prevention is the best protection. Review your workplace OHS practices often and thoroughly. Every activity within and around your workplace that involves the potential for risk must be addressed.

HELPFUL CONTACTS

NBN

www.nbnco.com.au

ACMA

www.acma.gov.au
1300 850 115
info@acma.gov.au

TRAINING PACKAGE

www.training.gov.au
1800 454 678

COMMUNICATIONS ALLIANCE

www.commsalliance.com.au
Wiring Rules AS/CA S009:2013

UNDERGROUND CABLE LOCATIONS

www.1000.com.au

REGISTERED CABLERS

www.registeredcable.com.au

SMARTWIRED

www.smartwiredhouse.com.au

A2A and NETWORK BOUNDARY ISSUES

www.telstra.com.au/smartcommunity/mybuilder.html

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