

Message from the Commissioner for Electrical Safety



As Commissioner for Electrical Safety, I advise the Minister on electrical safety matters generally and on any proposed codes of practice to manage electrical risks.

My other functions include chairing and managing the activities of the Electrical Safety Board and its three committees, which are specifically concerned with licensing and disciplinary matters, electrical safety promotion and safety standards for electrical equipment.

The first strategic plan, the *Electrical Safety Plan for Queensland 2003–2008*, was developed by the inaugural Board in late 2003. Over the life of the first plan, we have seen many improvements in electrical safety, both in the increased awareness in electrical safety over the period and also in the range of programs and initiatives implemented to help combat electrical incidents. I believe some of the key achievements over the past five years have been:

- Electrical workers have a better understanding of their obligations.
- Electrical safety in homes and workplaces has been greatly improved through the progressive introduction of safety switches.
- A community engagement function has been established that seeks to communicate electrical safety messages to industry and the public more effectively.
- Compliance programs have been improved through evidence-based methodologies.
- Enforcement policies provide a better balance between pro-active and reactive interventions.
- Licensing policies and procedures are more effective and consistent, and the range of disciplinary actions available to the Electrical Licensing Committee has been improved.

- Queensland's influential role at the national level has also improved, with the appointment in 2005 of Queensland as the Co-coordinating Chair (and Secretariat) for the Electrical Regulatory Authorities Council.
- A new *Code of Practice Electrical Equipment—Rural Industry* was developed, to give practical advice on how to manage electrical risk in rural industry work.
- Electrical fatalities in Queensland continue to occur at below the national five year moving average.

In developing the new *Electrical Safety Plan for Queensland 2009–2014*, the Board aimed to ensure it could be easily understood, would help create a greater awareness of electrical safety issues, and encourage compliance with the legislation. I believe we have achieved this.

The plan states that the Board's vision is the 'elimination of the human costs to individuals, families and the community of deaths, injury and destruction that can be caused by electricity'. The five year goal is 'the elimination of all preventable electrical deaths'.

These are no easy tasks and were not established lightly. In order to achieve this we need to continue to reduce electrical fatalities over the life of the plan and also work towards achieving a sustained reduction in serious electrical incidents.

The Board looks forward to working with all key stakeholders to bring about these positive outcomes and work on changing the culture in workplaces and homes to ensure the dangers of electricity are clearly understood and that the provisions of the electrical safety legislation and codes of practice are known and practiced for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

I am pleased with our progress to date and look forward to continuing this important and potentially life-saving work with you in the future.

It gives me great pleasure to commend the *Electrical Safety Plan for Queensland 2009–2014* to you.

Jack Camp

Commissioner for Electrical Safety

November 2008