

# INSTALLATION INFORMATION REQUIRED AT DISTRIBUTION BOARDS

One of the departures from BS 7671 which is still commonly recorded by NICEIC Engineers is the omission to provide adequate installation information at distribution boards and consumer units. This article updates the guidance given in Newsletter 144 (December 2002).

Regulation 514-09-01 requires that a durable and legible diagram, chart, table or equivalent form of information is provided at distribution boards and consumer units, to indicate in particular:

- the type and composition of each circuit (points of utilisation served, number and size of conductors, type of wiring), **and**
- the method used for compliance with Regulation 413-01-01 (that is, the method adopted for protection against indirect contact) and, where appropriate, the data required by Regulation 413-02-04 (that is, the characteristics of the protective devices used for automatic disconnection, and the earthing arrangements), **and**
- the information necessary for the identification of each device performing the functions of protection, isolation and switching, and its location, **and**
- circuit(s) or equipment vulnerable to a typical test (for example, an insulation resistance test may damage some equipment).

Such information is also required to satisfy requirement P2 of the Building Regulations for England and Wales, which requires that, for dwellings, 'sufficient information shall be provided so that persons wishing to operate, maintain or alter an electrical installation can do so with reasonable safety.'

A convenient way of providing much of this information is by means of a separate copy of the *Schedule of Circuit Details for the Installation*, which forms part of NICEIC Electrical Installation Certificate.

Alternatively, for installations within the scope of the NICEIC Domestic Electrical Installation Certificate, a separate copy of page 3 of the certificate may be used.

As the original copy of such schedules should be issued to the person ordering the work together with the other page(s) comprising the original copy of the certificate, and the duplicate copy of the certificate retained by the issuing contractor for record purposes, the separate copy provided for a distribution board should be a photocopy. For less simple installations, the provision of more

comprehensive information and drawings will be necessary.

Where a photocopy of a certification schedule is used to provide most of the required installation information, and the installation includes equipment (incorporating electronic components, for example) which may be vulnerable to a typical test, it would be necessary to provide a separate warning notice.

Installation information provided in the form of photocopy of a certification schedule should be legible, protected from damage and deterioration (for example by enclosure in a clear plastic folder), and fixed within or adjacent to the relevant distribution board or consumer unit.

In addition to the provision of full information to meet the requirements of Regulation 514-09-01, the simple means for circuit identification provided by the manufacturers of distribution boards and consumer units should also be utilized to give a clear and separate indication of the function of each circuit, and of the equipment it supplies.

In addition to the general installation information, the need to provide notices relating to the periodic inspection and testing of electrical installations should not be overlooked.

A standard notice drawing attention to the need for periodic inspection and testing, and indicating the dates of the previous and next recommended inspection, should be provided in a prominent position at or near the origin of every installation in accordance with Regulation 514-12-01. Also, where an installation incorporates one or more residual current devices, a standard notice drawing attention to the need for the user of the installation to test the device(s) quarterly should be provided in a prominent position at or near the origin of the installation in accordance with Regulation 514-12-02.

*NICEIC versions of both these notices are available from NICEIC Sales - see enclosed order form for details.*

**Where an addition and/or an alteration is carried out to an existing installation that involves changes to the circuitry, the installation information record should be updated accordingly. Also, when an installation has been subject to a periodic inspection, the periodic**

**inspection notice should be updated or replaced, as appropriate.**

