

## 3.12 Home Safety and Energy Audits

### Background

Australia's ageing residential housing stock presents serious challenges to incoming home owners or renters as existing electrical wiring including associated equipment may be:

- » **Compliant with previous versions of the Australian Building Code (ABC)**
- » **Non-compliant with the current standards as set out in the ABC**
- » **Degrading and/or deteriorating so remedial action is either immediately or imminently required.**

### Key issues and recommendations

#### Home Safety Electrical Audit

NECA argues that routine/regular electrical safety checks in residential or commercial property will provide a clear signal to property owners with respect to safety/standard adequacy. Such a signal should then give rise to property owners who will act to improve the wiring (and safety) standards of their property. Home Safety Electrical Audits would be carried out by a qualified and licensed electrician at all times.

Home electrical safety checks are encouraged but not enforced across Australian states and territories. NECA believes it is critical that all home purchasers are made aware of any wiring or electrical safety concerns upon the sale and purchase of a property. The same approach should also occur for any new rental agreement.

This proposition is both quick and inexpensive and would provide the consumer with a list of safety awareness issues along with possible remedies and costs. The consumer can then budget for remedial works for their residence

The Tasmanian Government, in consultation with NECA, has developed a pilot scheme for an Electrical Safety Audit program on Government owned housing. The intention of the pilot is to identify electrical safety risks associated with the normal use of an electrical installation through an inspection carried out by a suitable organisation, overseen by Tasmania's Electricity Standards and Safety (ESS). Following each inspection, a report is provided to the installation owner that identifies electrical safety risks to be managed and resolved.

**R49: NECA proposes that a mandatory Safety Audit occurs at the point of sale or any new rental arrangement. The Transfer of Title would not occur until a proof of Safety Audit was produced to the relevant government Land Titles Office. This would be quick and inexpensive and provide the consumer with a list of safety issues, remedies and costs allowing them to budget and remedy their residence in an appropriate manner.**

**R50: NECA supports the Tasmanian Government's development of a pilot scheme for Electrical Safety Audits for government owned housing and encourages all states and territories to develop similar schemes that will help mitigate electrical risks to property.**

### **Home Energy Audits (at point of sale)**

In conjunction with the proposed Home Safety Audit, NECA proposes that state and territory governments implement a scheme to encourage property owners to undertake a voluntary Home Energy Audit.

This scheme would allow property purchasers to undertake an energy efficiency test that provides them with information to help them make informed decisions about energy usage, allowing them to reduce their costs by replacing energy intensive and/or inefficient products such as air-conditioning units, pool pumps, hot water systems, washing machines and dryers. Home Energy Audits would be carried out by a qualified and licensed electrician at all times.

**R51: NECA proposes that state and territory governments encourage property owners to undertake voluntary Home Energy Audits. Home Energy Audits should occur at the point of sale or with any new rental arrangement. Such a proposition would be quick and inexpensive to introduce and would provide the consumer with options around how best to reduce their energy bill and carbon footprint.**

