

Question on Notice
No. 987
Asked on Wednesday, 7 June 2006

MS LEE LONG ASKED THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND MINISTER FOR SPORT (MR BARTON)—

With reference to interstate tradesmen such as carpenters, who have come to far north Queensland to assist in the rebuilding after Cyclone Larry—

Have they had to qualify to Queensland standards; if so, how has this been achieved and at what cost to these tradesmen?

ANSWER –

Cyclone Larry - Electrical repair and restoration work

The licensing requirements for interstate electrical contractors seeking to work in Queensland to assist in the rebuilding following Cyclone Larry do not impose any additional requirements or costs than existed for interstate electrical contractors seeking work in Queensland before Cyclone Larry occurred.

The licensing requirements for interstate electrical contractors in the Queensland electrical safety legislation aim to ensure that all electrical work undertaken in Queensland is completed in a consistent and qualified way so as to provide a high level of electrical safety to all Queenslanders.

During the declared State of Emergency and in the specified Disaster Zone, the Electrical Safety Office made the following arrangements:

- Performing electrical work associated with damage caused by Cyclone Larry would not require a Queensland electrical contractor licence provided:
 - a fee for service was not charged; and
 - the work was carried out under a current Contractor Licence from another Australian State or Territory; and
 - the work was performed under contract to Insurance Company.Otherwise a Queensland Electrical Contractor Licence was required.
- Any such work as to be carried out by a qualified electrical mechanic who holds a Queensland electrical mechanic licence or an equivalent licence as per schedule 1 *Electrical Safety Regulation 2002*. This includes all States & Territories within Australia & New Zealand.

Once the State of Emergency was lifted, the following arrangements applied:

- Performing electrical work associated with damage caused by Cyclone Larry requires a Queensland electrical contractor licence as per *Queensland Electrical Safety Act & Regulation 2002*.

Assistance to interstate contractor applicants:

- With respect to interstate electrical contractors applying for a Queensland Electrical Contractor Licence, the following information has been made available:
 - applicants to mark their application “Cyclone Larry” to streamline processing;
 - the ESO’s website contains electrical licensing information; and
 - interstate electrical contractors must meet current insurance requirements under s.43 of the *Queensland Electrical Safety Regulation 2002*. This may necessitate purchase of an additional policy to cover the \$50,000 Consumer Protection Liability insurance required by the Queensland legislation. A list of insurance providers was supplied: the cost of this insurance is approximately \$600.

BACKGROUND

During the State of Emergency:

- Electrical lineworkers from interstate or New Zealand and not holding a Queensland linesperson licence could receive a Permit under the auspices of the electricity entity employing them. The ESO arranged to issue a Permit to an electricity entity applicant in the category of work for a period of 2 months under the condition that the linespersons listed in their application performed the electrical work under the supervision of the electricity entity.
- In the case of Restricted Electrical Work Licences, electrical work must only be carried out as per the endorsements on the licence and the person must be the holder of a Queensland Restricted Electrical Licence.
- **Workplace Health and Safety Queensland**

Licences are required by workers who operate equipment in prescribed occupations i.e. cranes, hoist’s, scaffolders and forklifts, which are based on nationally agreed requirements. Queensland, along other States and Territories, automatically recognise a person’s National Certificates of Competency in these occupations regardless of the state in which the certificate was issued.

Consequently interstate tradespersons assisting with the cyclone relief effort would not be required to undertake training or apply for any further qualifications to operate this equipment in Queensland, where they have a national certificate.

Queensland requires licences to operate certain types of load shifting equipment i.e. bulldozers and graders, which may not be required in all States and Territories. Where a licence is required in Queensland but not in the tradesperson’s State of origin, the tradesperson has the option of either performing the work under the supervision of a licence holder, or apply for a Queensland licence. Where they apply for a licence, the cost of the licence is \$48.30.

As the information above only relates to responsibilities relevant to my Industrial Relations Portfolio, the Minister for Public Works, Housing and Racing and the Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women may have additional information on building standards relevant to tradesmen working in the cyclone affected region.