



Wessex Association of Model Railway Clubs

Electrical wiring regulations

Risk Assessment update in advance of the issue of revised BS 7671: 2008.

The I. E. T. Wiring Regulations are currently being revised, with a view to publication of a new edition in January 2008.

The Regulations, colloquially known as the '17th Edition' will include a new section, (section 711) specifically dedicated to Requirements for Exhibitions, Shows and Stands.

These Requirements will be mandatory from June 2008. Failure to fully comply would be construed as negligence should any mishap occur.

The official period for inspection and comment on the proposed content of the new regulations has now passed, and the text has been withdrawn from I. E. T's website. However, at my request, I. E. T. technical section have kindly provided a verbal summary of the expected provisions to me, so far as they are likely to affect the vast majority of model railway exhibitions. The salient points are set out below.

When considering a new or even previously- used venue for the purposes of risk assessment, exhibition managers or their electrically competent assistants will need to verify that the electricity supply conforms to the new requirements. Specifically, this means that the mains supply that they intend to draw from at an intended venue must be protected by Residual Current Detector(s) set to trip at not more than 300 milliamps, with built- in delay.

This may not be the case with older or less well-maintained properties, but relevant buildings constructed or re- wired since the late '90s should conform.

The onus is on the exhibiting organisation to confirm this. Any proposed exhibition environment not conforming to this standard should be rejected.

The Exhibition Manager should designate a **competent person** to be **responsible** for all electrical matters concerning the proposed exhibition, whose **authority** with respect to electrical safety will be regarded and supported as **absolute**.

The electrical part of the risk assessment should contain a statement that the requirements of Section 711 of the Wiring Regulations will be fulfilled, and that every connection to a supply socket will have to be made through a Residual Current Detector set to trip at not more than 30 milliamps and in less that 40 milliseconds.

This necessity should be conveyed to all prospective participants in the show, including ancillary activities such as catering.

(The characteristics quoted are those of the usual integral R. C. D. plugs or adaptors sold through the trade for use on outdoor tools such as lawnmowers etc. The fuses fitted to these devices must be appropriate to the cable connected to them and to the apparatus supplied.)

The new regulations will require that safety barriers made of conducting material must

increasing number of exhibitors and visitors to exhibitions using wheeled transport of various kinds, 'gaffer tape' alone is no longer an adequate protection for cabling. The Regulations are expected to be specific about this matter in any case.

4) Exhibitors and others who bring non- professionally made mains- supplied equipment to exhibitions must ensure that it conforms to the regulations in respect of