Guidelines for allowing non electrical workers access to switchboards

1. Introduction

The University of Queensland has reviewed its policy for the issue of keys permitting non electrical workers to access building switch board enclosures and the following Guidelines now apply from the date of this document. The intent is to ensure that only responsible persons have access to such keys and to reduce the number of keys in current circulation whilst maintaining a degree of flexibility to permit a limited number of authorised persons to reset RCDs within minor distribution and sub installation switchboards. Access to main/major switchboard enclosures is not permitted within these Guidelines.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDELINE AN RCD WILL BE IDENTIFIED BY THE FACT THAT IT HAS INCORPORATED WITHIN IT’S CONSTRUCTION A PUSH BUTTON TEST DEVICE WHEREAS A CONVENTIONAL CIRCUIT BREAKER WILL NOT HAVE SUCH A TEST FACILITY

2. Requirements

- Only persons authorised by Property and Facilities Division will in future retain keys permitting access to switch boards
- An authorised person is a responsible individual who has been identified as having a defined need to access the frontal face of a switchboard panel for the exclusive purpose of visual inspection or to reset an RCD.
- To be recognised as an authorised person an individual must have undergone training and awareness to a standard acceptable to P&F Electrical Engineering staff. Refresher training will be undertaken at intervals yet to be determined.
- Access to switch boards will be permitted exclusively for the purposes of visual inspection and to reset a single pole RCD.
- The resetting of any conventional CIRCUIT BREAKER whether controlling a single circuit or 3 phase circuit is not permitted. This includes Main and Sub main control/protective devices.
- Authorised persons will be responsible and held accountable for the control and security of any key issued to them. Accordingly keys must not be loaned to another person.
- Only a single attempt shall be made to reset a tripped RCD.
- An insulating medium a minimum of 500mm in length will be used to initiate any reset attempt. (A piece of dry wooden dowel or similar non conductive material)
- It must be confirmed that the RCD to be reset corresponds to the affected circuit by verification of circuit numbering.
- Any RCD/Device bearing a Do Not Operate Tag or sticker must not be interfered with.
- In the event that an RCD does not reset on the initial attempt or the loss of supply is due to a tripped conventional circuit breaker P&F must be advised accordingly in a timely manner to minimise interruption times.
• Any defect noticed at or within a switchboard eg. damage or distortion, faulty locks, burning smells, visible signs of overheating of equipment, facia panels not securely fastened, inappropriate storage of materials or accumulation of waste, missing cover plates etc must be reported to P&F electrical staff promptly.
• Instances of constant tripping of an RCD protected circuit must be reported to P&F electrical staff immediately the trend is noticed.
• Non compliances outside the scope of this Guideline may result in the withdrawal of keys from and subsequent disciplinary action being taken against the individual.

NO ELECTRICAL WORK IS TO BE CARRIED OUT ON ANY FIXED ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION WITHIN ANY UNIVERSITY OWNED OR OPERATED FACILITY WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL FROM PROPERTY AND FACILITIES DIVISION.