



national
electrical and
communications
association

3 April 2020

Dr Andrew Robertson
Chief Medical Officer
PO Box 8172
PERTH BUSINESS CENTRE WA 6849

Dear Dr Robertson

URGENT CLARIFICATION – ‘ESSENTIAL SERVICES’ WITH RESPECT TO ELECTRICIANS

I write to you on behalf of the National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) seeking urgent clarification around the term ‘essential services’ and how it applies to electricians in the State of Western Australia. NECA is the peak industry body for Australia’s electrical and communications contracting industry, which employs more than 165,000 workers Australia wide.

NECA understands that in the event of a public direction, you are the appropriate person to exercise discretion and issue an exemption/exclusion to any public direction.

You will appreciate the critical role that electricians play in maintaining power to both public and private infrastructures and facilities. Typically this includes the role of generation through to the maintenance of hospitals, medical centres and government offices, as well as ensuring the community is connected. Electricians also install and maintain communications infrastructure such as the NBN and security systems which are critical for our hospitals, prisons, emergency services and broader society to operate.

These roles and activities require teams of electricians to travel from their base to site in order to ensure connectivity.

Given the often complex nature of many jobs, lead time is critical for electricians to be able to plan, purchase and implement site specific requirements – in other words the more advance notice our members have in relation to any public direction, the better the connectivity outcome.

NECA seeks your urgent clarification as to the following:

- That electricians are included within the definition of ‘essential service’;
- That exemptions/exclusions are then applied to electricians, taking into consideration that the industry is reliant upon teamwork and the need to travel to and from site; and
- That a channel of communications be directly established between us, such that I can effectively and efficiently direct information to our members.

I would appreciate you contacting me as soon as is practicable, such that we can provide certainty to Western Australia’s electricians and the broader community.

My contact details are carl.copeland@necawa.asn.au or mobile 0458 304 804.

Yours sincerely

Carl Copeland
Chapter Secretary

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