

Misuse of NICEIC Periodic Inspection Report forms

PIR forms should be used specifically to report on whether an existing electrical installation is in a satisfactory condition for continued use and not for any other purpose

NICEIC regularly receives complaints regarding the misuse of the NICEIC Periodic Inspection Report forms (PIR). These have highlighted the following areas of misuse:

- To certify electrical installation work (which may have been carried out by other contractors).
- To demonstrate compliance with the requirements of Part P of the *Building Regulations (2000)* for England and Wales, or the *Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004*.
- To state that the installation is in satisfactory condition after carrying out uncertified remedial works to an installation.

Intended use of the PIR

The intended use of a PIR is to report on whether an existing electrical installation is in a satisfactory condition for continued use. The PIR should provide for:

- the safety of persons and livestock against the effects of electric shock and burns,
- protection against damage to property by fire and heat arising from an installation defect,
- confirmation that the installation is not damaged or deteriorated so as to impair safety, and
- the identification of installation defects and departures from the requirements of the current issue of BS 7671 (as amended) that may give rise to danger.

Misuse – to certify electrical installation work

All electrical installation work should be certified as required by Part 7 of BS 7671: 2001 (Part 6 of BS 7671: 2008), generally by the contractor that carried out the work.

The form used for this should be an Electrical Installation Certificate (EIC) or, where applicable, a Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate (MEIWC), or the domestic equivalent of these. If the form is an NICEIC form, it may be issued only by the NICEIC registered contractor that constructed the work.

A PIR must not be used as a substitute for any of the forms of certificate in the previous paragraph. Unlike them, a PIR does not:

- provide a declaration by the designer and constructor of the electrical installation work that

they have carried out their duties in accordance with BS 7671, nor

- give the results of the inspection of cables and other items designed to be concealed, as these will have been covered up by the time the PIR was carried out.

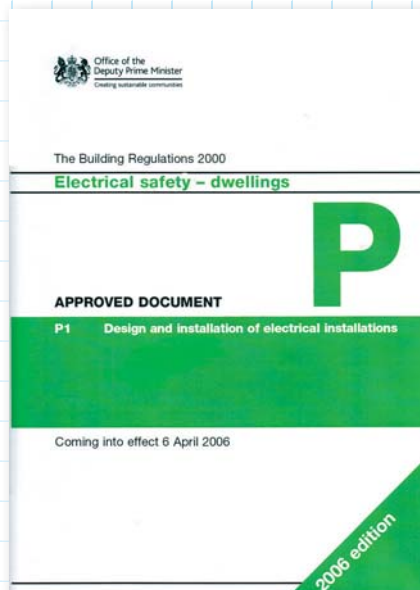
Misuse – to show compliance with Building Regulations

England and Wales (Part P of the Building Regulations)

Local Authority Building Control Departments for England and Wales have reported the issuing of NICEIC PIRs to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of Part P of the *Building Regulations (2000)*. Issuing a PIR in lieu of an EIC is not an acceptable practice, as final inspection and testing alone cannot provide sufficient verification for

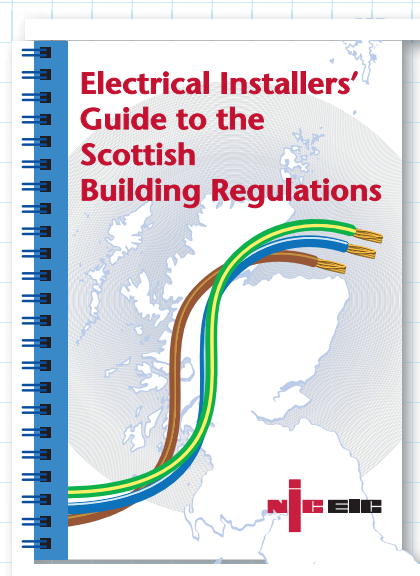
1 A PIR does not provide declarations by the designer and constructor (such as those below, which are included in an EIC)

DESIGN			
I/We, being the person(s) responsible for the design of the electrical installation (as indicated by my/our signature(s) below), particulars of which are described above, having exercised reasonable skill and care when carrying out the design, hereby CERTIFY that the design work for which I/we have been responsible is, to the best of my/our knowledge and belief, in accordance with BS 7671 amended to _____ (date) except for the departures, if any, detailed as follows: _____			
Details of departures from BS 7671, as amended (Regulations 120.3, 120.4): _____			
The extent of liability of the signatory/signatories is limited to the work described above as the subject of this certificate. For the DESIGN of the installation: ** (Where there is divided responsibility for the design)			
Signature _____	Date _____	Name (CAPITALS) _____	Designer 1
Signature _____	Date _____	Name (CAPITALS) _____	** Designer 2
CONSTRUCTION			
I/We, being the person(s) responsible for the construction of the electrical installation (as indicated by my/our signature below), particulars of which are described above, having exercised reasonable skill and care when carrying out the construction, hereby CERTIFY that the construction work for which I/we have been responsible is, to the best of my/our knowledge and belief, in accordance with BS 7671 amended to _____ (date) except for the the departures, if any, detailed as follows: _____			
Details of departures from BS 7671, as amended (Regulations 120.3, 120.4): _____			
The extent of liability of the signatory is limited to the work described above as the subject of this certificate. For the CONSTRUCTION of the installation:			
Signature _____	Date _____	Name (CAPITALS) _____	Constructor



compliance with the requirements of BS 7671. Some inspection and testing during the erection of the installation is usually also necessary.

Approved Document P (2006) states in clause 1.8 that 'compliance with Part P can be demonstrated by the issue of the appropriate BS 7671 Electrical Installation Certificate'. It also states in clause 1.28 that 'unregistered installers should not themselves arrange for a third party to carry out final inspection and testing. The third party, not having supervised the work from the outset, would not be in a position to verify the installation complied fully with the requirements of BS 7671'.



Scotland (Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004)
As in England and Wales, Scotland also has a certification scheme for showing compliance with the *Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004*. The scheme is monitored by The Scottish Building Standards Agency (SBSA).

The SBSA has produced two technical handbooks for building regulation guidance, covering domestic buildings and non-domestic buildings. Clauses 4.5 of both these handbooks provide guidance for the electrical installer on electrical safety. Clause 4.5.1 states that, 'an electrical installation should be designed, constructed and tested such that it is in accordance with the recommendations of BS 7671'. A PIR does not generally meet the requirements of BS 7671 for initial inspection and testing of installation work, as it does not provide for any inspection and testing during the erection of the installation.

NICEIC provides guidance upon the *Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004* in the "Electrical Installers Guide to the Scottish Building Regulations".

Exceptional circumstances

Exceptionally, a building control body in England, Wales or Scotland may accept a PIR in lieu of an EIC in circumstances such as:

- the death of the contractor
- illness of the contractor
- a contractual dispute.

However, this procedure would be adopted only where the building control body had determined during the construction of the building that the requirements of BS 7671 and the relevant building regulations had been met. Only the building control body can make the decision to accept a PIR in lieu of an EIC.

Misuse – after carrying out uncertified remedial works to an installation

Some Local Authorities and Housing Associations have reported receiving PIRs stating that an installation was in satisfactory condition, where the installation was

in fact known to have previously had deficiencies. Subsequent investigations revealed that the contractor who issued the PIR had done so after carrying out uncertified electrical work to correct the deficiencies in the installation. This amounts to using a PIR as a substitute for an EIC or MEIWC, which, as indicated earlier in this article, is unacceptable.

The correct procedure would be to take the following steps, in the order indicated.

- Inspect and test the installation and issue a PIR identifying the deficiencies.
- Carry out, inspect and test the remedial works to correct the deficiencies, and issue an EIC (or, where applicable, a MEIWC) for these works.

The combination of the PIR that identifies the deficiencies, and the EIC or MEIWC would satisfy the reporting and certification requirements until the next periodic inspection.

An optional additional step, if required by the person ordering the work, would be to issue a further PIR, indicating that the installation is in a satisfactory condition, immediately after the remedial work is carried out. This second PIR, together with the EIC (or MEIWC) will also satisfy the reporting and certification requirements until the next periodic inspection.