

23 August 2024

Regulatory Systems (Immigration and Workforce) Amendment Bill Review
Education and Workforce Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Submitted via online form

To whom it may concern,

Electricity Networks Aotearoa (ENA) appreciates the opportunity to submit on the Education and Workforce Select Committee's review of the Regulatory Systems (Immigration and Workforce) Amendment Bill (the Bill).

ENA is the industry membership body that represents the 27 electricity distribution businesses (EDBs), listed in Appendix A, that deliver electricity to homes and businesses across Aotearoa. ENA harnesses the collective expertise of members to promote safe, reliable and affordable power for our members' consumers.

The EDBs of New Zealand own and maintain over 150,000 km of electricity lines across the country, serving approximately 2.3 million consumers. This critical national infrastructure supports the day-to-day wellbeing of New Zealanders and is vital to the functioning of the economy. In order to perform this function EDBs rely upon a comprehensive suite of electro-technical standards, both domestic (i.e. AS/NZS) and international (e.g. IEC, ISO, etc)

The distribution sector has at times been frustrated by the slow pace of adoption into regulation of more modern versions of critical standards. For example, the AS/NZS 4777 suite of standards relating to the grid connection of energy systems via inverters, which is vital to the effective and safe operation of grid-connected solar photovoltaic systems, is still referenced to the 2005 version of AS 4777.1 – now some 19 years out of date - in the Electricity (Safety) Regulations. In the fast-moving world of power system technological development, it is important that the New Zealand distribution sector is able to rely upon modern standards referenced in relevant regulations and codes in a timely manner.

ENA understands that the provisions in part 1 of the Bill are intended to allow for WorkSafe to more quickly and easily update references to standards in electricity safety instruments by way of delegation of ministerial powers. We are very pleased to see this and strongly support this element of the Bill. We encourage the committee to recommend that this part be retained in the Bill passed by Parliament. This will ensure that the New Zealand power system (and by extension, electricity consumers) can continue to adopt and utilise new and emerging technologies in a safe and effective manner.

ENA is happy to provide further information and assistance to the Committee if that would be helpful. Please contact Richard Le Gros, Policy and Innovation Manager, in the first instance – richard@electricity.org.nz.

Yours sincerely



Richard Le Gros
Policy and Innovation Manager

Appendix A: ENA Members

Electricity Networks Aotearoa makes this submission along with the support of its members, listed below.

Alpine Energy
Aurora Energy
Buller Electricity
Centralines
Counties Energy
Electra
EA Networks
Firstlight Network
Horizon Energy Distribution
MainPower NZ
Marlborough Lines
Nelson Electricity
Network Tasman
Network Waitaki
Northpower
Orion New Zealand
Powerco
PowerNet
Scanpower
The Lines Company
Top Energy
Unison Networks
Vector
Waipa Networks
WEL Networks
Wellington Electricity Lines
Westpower