

Choosing a Compliant Luminaire

The issue of product regulatory compliance and non-compliance in the NZ construction and electrical industries is a real and tangible dilemma. To navigate a safe path, here are some guidelines for buyers and contractors to consider when choosing luminaires:

NZ SUPPLIER MANDATORY OBLIGATIONS

There are stringent mandatory regulatory obligations for importers and manufacturers of luminaires and related products in NZ. These cover:

- Product and Installation Safety – electrical, thermal, physical
- Electro Magnetic Compatibility (EMC) – radio and ICT interference
- Energy Performance – Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS)



The AU/NZ Regulatory Compliance Mark (RCM) is the product label that is required on all regulated luminaires and related products offered to the NZ market.

NZ LIGHTING SAFETY STANDARDS LEAD THE WORLD

NZ safety standards are being taken to the world. Australia has experienced hundreds of house fires from recessed luminaires, but NZ has avoided this trauma by developing the NZ only "Amendment A" AS/NZS recessed luminaire standard. This has now been adopted by Australia and is currently under consideration for elevation to an international IEC standard.

THE NZ LIGHTING MARKET IS HIGHLY COMPETITIVE

There will always be cheaper product available online or from importers who have avoided their obligations to invest in compliance. Reputable NZ lighting suppliers invest to deliver lighting products that are suitable for NZ conditions and which meet all regulatory requirements. Meeting compliance criteria carries significant cost for suppliers which is unavoidable, but essential.

DIRECT IMPORTS

There are many internet opportunities to directly import luminaires or to buy from a transient NZ internet trader. These products will not comply unless:

- They have been specifically designed for the AU/NZ market
- They are labelled in accord with AU/NZ regulatory requirements
- The importer is a government registered importer or manufacturer
- The importer holds product specific Technical Compliance Files

Luminaires which may appear cheap online may not be so when the necessary importer obligations are met.

ARE NON-COMPLIANT LUMINAIRES AVAILABLE IN NZ?

Unfortunately, yes. Some importers are avoiding their mandatory regulatory obligations. This is highly unsatisfactory, but government regulators don't have the resources to police every case. The losers are the unsuspecting buyers who are being short changed on safety, performance and peace of mind.

So you have to ask – if the worst happens; will insurance companies pay claims? Will installer licences be at risk?

THE ELECTRICAL INSTALLERS' RESPONSIBILITY

The licenced electrician is the responsible party that must sign the CoC that all mandatory regulatory obligations have been met. Installers need to ensure that their luminaire supplier has strong compliance competencies.

MEETING COMPLIANCE – WHAT TO DO?

- Always work with trusted brands and suppliers of substance
- Always ask suppliers for evidence of product regulatory compliance
- Always look for the product RCM mark

LCNZ is the industry association for lighting manufacturing and importing companies in New Zealand.

www.lightingcouncil.org.nz

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