

Found: Non-compliant cabling, return to owner

Many cablers have been contracted to conduct moves, adds or changes to a building's cabling infrastructure only to discover non-compliant work from previous installations.

Conscientious cablers have understandably felt anxious that they would be blamed for the trouble they found if they said nothing, or that the work they subsequently conducted would perform below par because of the legacy cabling. In some cases, cablers have even taken the trouble (and expense) to correct the original mess.

Most said they felt powerless to do anything about it, expressing a reluctance to 'dob in' their fellow cablers.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) has recently updated the Telecommunications Cabling Advice form, commonly referred to as the TCA1 form, to include a supplementary form (TCA2) which may be used by cablers to alert customers or building-owners of any non-compliant installations of which they may not be aware.

What is the TCA1 form?

As all registered cablers will know, the TCA1 form is a mandatory written advice to the customer or building manager on completion of a cabling job. It provides details of the cabling work undertaken, together with the cabler's registration details and a signed declaration that the cabling work is compliant with the Australian Standard AS/ACIF S009:2006 (Wiring Rules).

However, cablers have complained to ACMA and its registrars that they sometimes encountered pre-existing (legacy) cabling in roof spaces and other concealed locations that was not compliant with the Wiring Rules. Cablers were concerned that the customer or building owner may not be aware that these pre-existing cabling installations could pose a safety hazard or affect performance.

The TCA2 form is intended for use as an optional attachment to the TCA1 form, to alert customers and building owners of outstanding cabling issues that requires their attention. TCA1 and TCA2 forms can be downloaded from the following ACMA website:

www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_2459#forms

More information on TCA forms can be found here:

www.acma.gov.au/webwr/telcomm/cabling/cabling_brochure/tca_brochure-form.pdf

Remember! Cablers must fill in and sign a TCA1 form on completion of each cabling job. When filling out the form, you should describe the work clearly (specifying the type of work and location, for example, room, floor, section, department, building).

A copy of the form must be provided to the customer and your employer (if applicable). You must keep all copies of your TCA1 forms for at least 12 months and these must be made available to ACMA inspectors or cabling auditors on request.

You can make arrangements with your employer (if applicable) to keep your TCA1 forms on your behalf but, ultimately, you are responsible for them. To avoid additional paperwork, it is recommended that you incorporate the information on the TCA1 form into an existing invoice or other business documentation.

Further information and advice on cabling regulation is available from ACMA:

Website: www.acma.gov.au/cabling

Phone: 1300 850 115 or Email: ccat@acma.gov.au

Please note: this document is intended as a guide only and should not be relied on as legal advice or regarded as a substitute for legal advice in individual cases.