



NETWORKS

ESB Networks Submission:

Regulation of Electrical Contractors with respect to Safety

CER-15-108 – Consultation on the Scope of Controlled Electrical Works in relation to lifestyle choice prepayment meters

3rd July 2015

1. Introduction

ESB Networks welcomes the opportunity to respond to the CER’s consultation paper CER-15-108 – ‘Consultation on the Scope of Controlled Electrical Works in relation to lifestyle choice prepayment meters’.

As the Distribution System Operator, ESB Networks is interested in contributing to an appropriate safety supervisory framework to ensure the highest possible level of electrical safety in the Republic of Ireland.

The following ESB Networks submission provides suggestions and comments in relation to the proposals made and conforms to our opinion on the matter of the Regulation of Electrical Contractors and Safety and lifestyle choice prepayment meters.

ESB Networks looks forward to engagement on this topic and is open to further discussion and involvement.

2. Submission

ESB Networks has considered the following items as relevant for comment.

ESB networks welcomes the proposal by CER to review the process around the installation of lifestyle PAYG meters.

General

ESB Networks receive calls on a regular basis from customers with no supply which ESB Networks try to resolve. On a number of occasions the problem was found to be with the Lifestyle PAYG meter installation. These meters are installed by various contractors working on behalf of electricity suppliers.

The issues encountered include:

1. Poor quality connections at the meter
2. The connection method used to fit the meter
3. Incorrect connection at the meter such as supply in & load out wired in reverse to current standards
4. Incorrect connection resulting in reverse polarity at customers premises

These issues can lead to serious safety implications with respect to some lifestyle PAYG meter installations. Some of our discoveries such as burned out connections and phase reversals, could have led to fire, injury or even worse.

In all cases the PAYG meter and associated wiring has been installed by electricity suppliers who are using their own contract installers. These installations are covered by 'work on customer installation' and should meet the required standards and certification process for any work carried out on a customer installation.

Where necessary, ESB Networks will make the installation safe on site in order to protect the customer.

ESB Networks recommends:

- Follow up notification to the customer via standard Customer Installation Safety Notice
- Follow up with notifying electricity supplier if we are made aware of the supplier
- Notifying the Safety Supervisory Body (SSB) (RECI or ECSSA) if their member completed installation.

A system to track and ensure that Lifestyle PAYG meter installations are completed to the required standards is required.

Figure 2: Typical layout of lifestyle prepayment meter installation

ESB Networks suggests amending the connection diagram on page 11 as follows:

1. The 'DSO network' should enter at the 'ESBN fuse' position and continue to the 'ESBN meter' i.e. the 'ESBN meter' and 'ESBN fuse' positions should be reversed in the diagram. See figure 2a below, for example.
2. The Customer's main isolation/over-current device (circuit breaker) is only permitted to be in the 'ESBN meter cabinet' when tails to the 'Customer's distribution board' are greater than 3 Metres in length and comply with the requirements as described in ET 101 (430.4) ETCI. These should be shown in both possible positions, both inside (figure 2a) and outside (figure 2b) the 'ESBN meter cabinet', but in both cases located on the source side of prepayment meter.

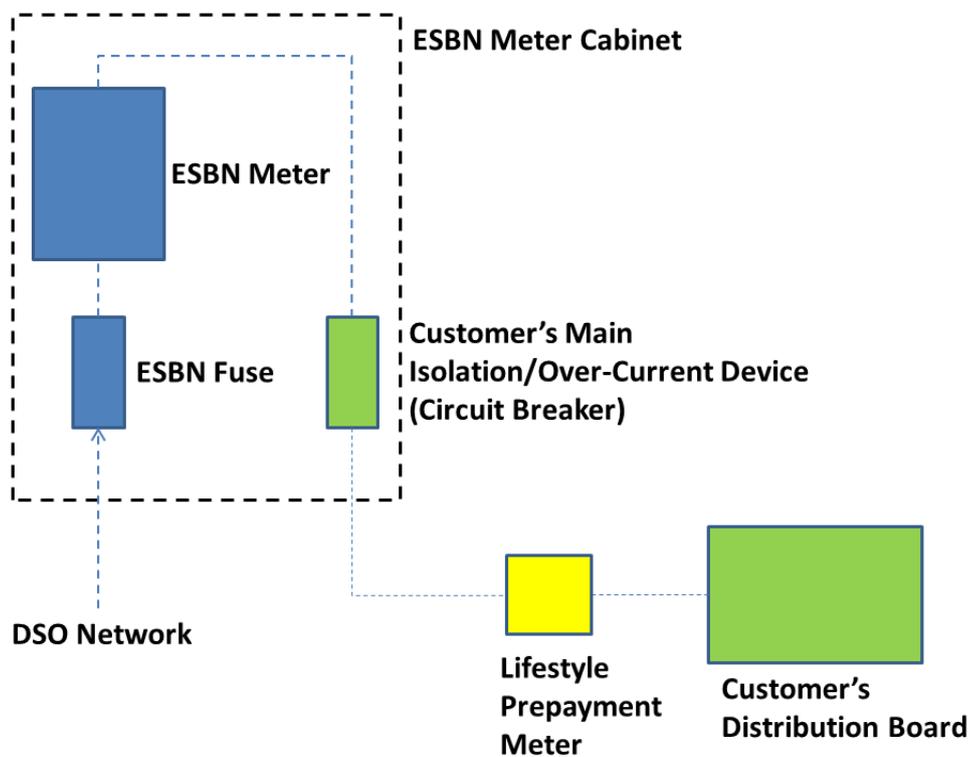


Figure 2a

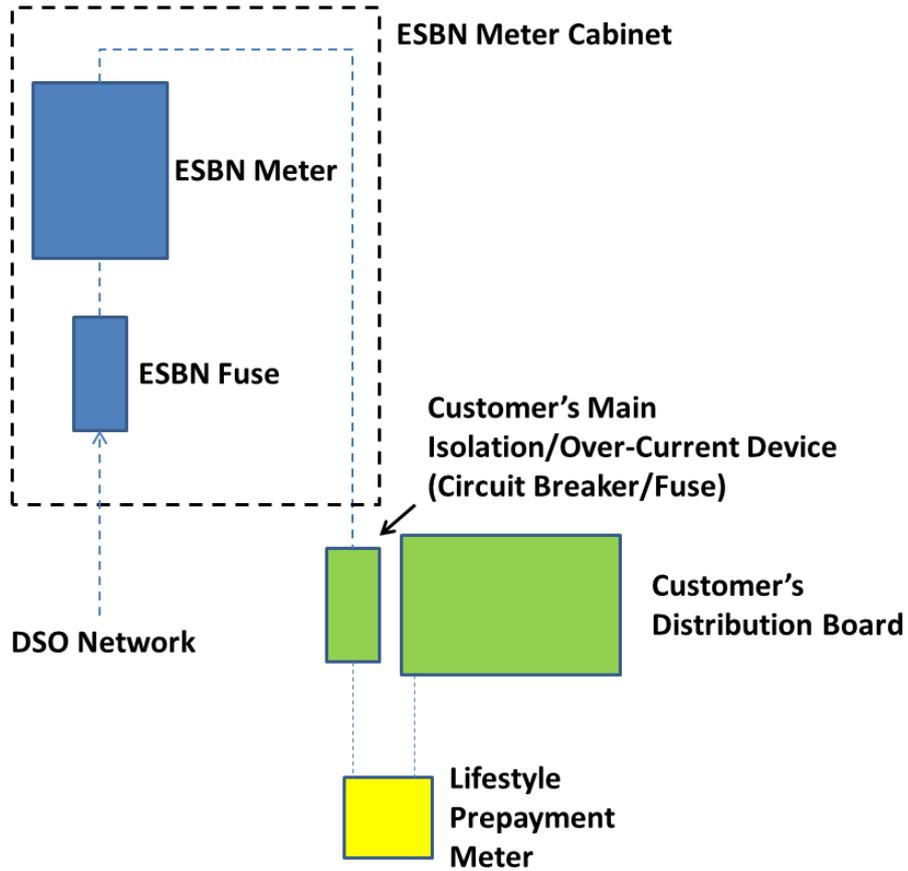


Figure 2b

ESB Networks also recommends that the Lifestyle Prepayment meters must always be supplied through a customer owned protective device. Some of the earlier lifestyle Prepayment Meters were installed directly after the DSO meter without any protective device to protect it.

3. Conclusion

ESB Networks is happy to engage further with CER on this very important matter with regard to making the network safer. ESB Networks fully support the proposed changes to the definition of Controlled Electrical Works to include for the installation of lifestyle PAYG meters.