



Electricity Safety Regulations 2026 Consultation
Department of Justice
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Dear Consultation Team

Electricity Safety Regulations 2026

COTA Tasmania welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed Electricity Safety Regulations 2026 and associated instruments.

COTA Tasmania is the peak body for older Tasmanians. Our interest in this consultation is not in the detailed technical regulation of electricity infrastructure, but in ensuring that the implementation of the new electricity safety framework recognises the needs and circumstances of older people, particularly those on low or fixed incomes, those living alone, those in older housing, and those who rely on electricity for health, safety and daily living.

COTA Tasmania supports the objective of improving electricity safety. Unsafe electrical installations, deteriorating infrastructure, electric shock risks, and fire hazards are all matters of genuine community concern. Older Tasmanians may be particularly vulnerable to the consequences of electrical incidents, as well as to the consequences of interruptions to supply or unaffordable repair requirements.

For this reason, COTA Tasmania urges the Government to ensure that the regulations, supporting guidance and implementation arrangements include strong consumer-facing safeguards.

Electricity is an essential service

Electricity is not simply a utility. For many older Tasmanians, it is essential to heating, refrigeration, lighting, communications, mobility, health equipment, medication storage, personal safety, and connection to emergency support.

Where electrical installations are found to be unsafe, COTA Tasmania accepts that urgent action may sometimes be necessary. However, any process that may result in isolation, disconnection, delayed reconnection, or significant rectification requirements should include clear safeguards for vulnerable householders.

COTA Tasmania recommends that implementation guidance require, wherever possible:

- clear and reasonable notice before supply is isolated or reconnection is refused;
- plain-English explanation of the safety issue and the steps needed to resolve it;
- explicit consideration of residents who rely on electricity for life support, health equipment, heating, refrigeration of medication or communication;
- referral pathways to retailers, distributors, hardship supports, concessions and community services where a person may be at risk; and

- urgent escalation arrangements where a resident is older, isolated, medically vulnerable, or unable to navigate the process without support.

Affordability and older housing

Many older Tasmanians live in older homes, rural properties, shacks, or dwellings with ageing electrical infrastructure. Some may also have private poles, aerial wiring, sheds, pumps, outbuildings, off-grid systems, or other installations that are not well understood by the householder but may carry safety obligations or rectification costs.

COTA Tasmania is concerned that older homeowners on low or fixed incomes may face significant financial stress if defects are identified and repairs are required quickly. While safety must remain paramount, the compliance pathway should distinguish between immediate danger and lower-risk defects that can safely be rectified over time.

COTA Tasmania recommends that the Government ensure:

- public guidance is written for householders, not only for electricians and electricity entities;
- rectification requirements are clearly explained, including whether work is urgent or can be staged;
- older people are referred to relevant hardship, concessions, energy efficiency or home repair assistance where available; and
- the impact of compliance and rectification costs on older Tasmanians is monitored after implementation.

Accessible communication and support

The consultation material acknowledges the importance of accessible and easily understood government information. This will be particularly important in implementing the electricity safety framework.

Technical notices, safety directions, and access arrangements can be confusing and stressful for householders. Older people may also face barriers including low digital literacy, limited internet access, cognitive impairment, disability, language barriers, anxiety about officials entering the property, or difficulty organising tradespeople.

COTA Tasmania recommends that all consumer-facing information include simple, practical guidance such as:

- what the new framework means for householders;
- what to do if a defect notice or safety notice is received;
- how to confirm whether an electrician is appropriately licensed;
- what to do if urgent electrical repairs are unaffordable;
- who to contact if the person relies on electricity for health or safety; and
- how to seek review, clarification or assistance.

Information should be available in non-digital formats as well as online, and should be distributed through trusted community channels including Service Tasmania, councils, community organisations, energy retailers, libraries, neighbourhood houses, and older persons' networks.

Entry to property and respectful processes

COTA Tasmania also notes the importance of respectful and accessible processes where authorised officers or electricity safety personnel need to access land or premises.

Older people should receive clear information about who is seeking access, why access is required, what powers are being exercised, and what rights the householder has. Where possible, older residents should be able to nominate a support person, family member, advocate, or property manager to assist them in understanding and responding to access requests.

COTA Tasmania recommends that implementation guidance include specific consideration of older people, people with disability, people with cognitive impairment, and people experiencing vulnerability or social isolation.

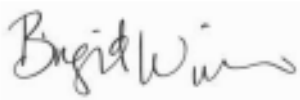
Summary of recommendations

COTA Tasmania recommends that the Government:

1. Build vulnerable-consumer safeguards into any process that may result in isolation, disconnection, delayed reconnection or loss of electricity supply.
2. Ensure householders receive plain-English, practical information about their obligations, rights and sources of support.
3. Provide clear referral pathways to hardship, concessions, repair assistance and community support where electrical safety compliance creates financial or practical difficulty.
4. Ensure rectification requirements distinguish between immediate danger and issues that can safely be addressed through staged compliance.
5. Require respectful and accessible processes for property access, notices, safety directions, and communication with householders.
6. Monitor the impact of the new framework on older homeowners, renters, and people living in older or regional housing.

COTA Tasmania supports the goal of a safer electricity system. Our concern is to ensure that, in achieving that goal, the implementation framework recognises electricity as an essential service and does not unintentionally place older Tasmanians at risk through unaffordable compliance costs, inaccessible information, or poorly managed supply interruptions.

Yours sincerely



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Chief Executive Officer

11th May 2026