

Guide to how BS 7671 is updated

Nicole Whitton explains the process behind the updates made to BS 7671 and how you can get involved.

The world's electrotechnical standard-setting body is the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). They publish the international series of standards, which has a designated reference IEC 60364 *Low voltage electrical installations*. The European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization, CENELEC, is the European standard-setting body and is responsible for adopting IEC 60364 standards, either as an identical or amended publication, as well as developing European-only applicable requirements. These are published as a series of standards with the designated reference of HD 60364 *Low voltage electrical installations*.

Finally, the British national standards body is BSI (British Standards Institution). BSI and the IET jointly publish BS 7671, which is primarily based on the IEC and CENELEC *Low voltage electrical installations* standards. A committee of experts from the electrotechnical industry is responsible for the maintenance and updating of BS 7671, taking into account the new and amended international and European standards. This committee is referenced JPEL/64.

('J' stands for 'joint' (as in, the committee is jointly run by BSI and IET). 'P' stands for 'power' (as in power generation). 'EL' stands for 'electrical' (as in the electrotechnical industry) and '64' relates to the number allocated by IEC and CENELEC to their electrotechnical committees producing the 60364 series of standards into which JPEL/64 provides the UK input.)

Who makes up JPEL/64?

JPEL/64 should be representative of the UK's electrotechnical industry, so members are carefully selected on the basis of their experience as well as the organisation that they represent. Each new regulation or modification is only made once all views from the committee have been considered.

Committee members come from various backgrounds, including representatives from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), manufacturers of electrical equipment, competent person scheme providers, training bodies and many more.

Debbie Stead from BSI summed up the process:

"The development of a new standard or a revision or amendment to an existing standard is undertaken by the responsible technical committee. Technical committees consist of organisations with an interest in the standard. The organisations nominate individuals to represent the wider views of that organisation and it is the expectation that the individual consults with the organisation they are representing to obtain views from other members and comes to the technical committee with a single view."

When is the next set of changes to BS 7671 expected?

Because of the complex relationship between BS 7671 and international/European standards, changes for this standard are batched into an amendment or new edition and usually occur every 3 years.



Work on the third Amendment to the 2008 version of BS 7671 (i.e. BS 7671:2008+A3:2015) was completed in December 2014, published in January 2015 with an implementation date of 1st July 2015.

The next update to BS 7671 is expected in 2018.

How can you keep updated?

For BS 7671, the committee constitution is in the public domain together with its work programme: <http://standardsdevelopment.bsigroup.com/Home/Committee/50001574>.

You can submit information relating to the work being undertaken through any of the nominating organisations of which you may be a member. In addition, there are currently two public commenting systems available for individuals to provide their input. All standards, revisions and amendments are issued for public comment.

For proposals for new work, please see: <http://standardsproposals.bsigroup.com/>.

For drafts out for public comment, please see: <http://drafts.bsigroup.com/>.

Once a standard is published, and indeed at any time during the lifecycle of the standard, comments can be submitted to the Secretariat which will then be passed to the technical committee for consideration.

We will also be introducing more regular technical updates related to BS 7671, written by Mark Coles, Technical Regulations Manager at the IET, and other members of the IET's Technical Regulations team where appropriate. These will keep you informed about technical issues, although it cannot go into the specific details about what happens inside committee meetings. The aim of these updates is to better prepare you for the next round of amendments to BS 7671.

The IET is preparing to publish a Student's Guide to the Wiring Regulations, available later in 2015. The Student's Guide to the Wiring Regulations covers, amongst other areas that are beneficial to students, the standard-setting process and the committee in more detail.