

Andrew Barr MLA

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Mrs Giulia Jones MLA

Chair

Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Legislative Assembly

GPO Box 1020

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Dear Chair

I thank the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety for the comments made in Scrutiny Report No.6 (the Report) about the Utilities (Streetlight Network) Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 (the Bill).

I note the comments made by the Committee in relation to the amendments to section 231 and 232 in *Utilities Act 2000* (Utilities Act) contained within the Bill. The explanatory statement provides further information about these amendments, and outlines the relevant safeguards that have been incorporated in relation to the use of the powers created by these amendments.

In relation to the comments made by the Committee about clauses 4 and 5 of the Bill, which seek to amend the *Electricity Safety Act 1971* (Electricity Safety Act) and the associated regulation, I wish to make brief comment within this letter in response.

I do not consider a revised explanatory statement is required, given these clauses are not introducing any new Australian Standard that is not already applicable in the ACT for the streetlight network, nor changing the interpretation of such standards within this context. Rather, these amendments are designed to provide explicit guidance and clarity for the industry about the approaches already available to achieving appropriate compliance in relation to work on the Territory's streetlight network.

Clause 4 proposes to insert the words 'design, approval, certification' into section 66(2)(b) of the Electricity Safety Act. While this amendment does extend the regulation making power available under the Act, this change is only required to give effect to the proposed regulation outlined in clause 5 of the Bill. The change within clause 5 is designed only to provide additional clarity, and does not amend the current standard (AS/NZS 3000) that is applied in the ACT when working on wiring for the streetlight network. Rather, this amendment explicitly outlines that there exists two parts, Part 1 or Part 2, as specified in AS/NZS 3000 that can be used to reach compliance.

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I also note the issue raised by the Committee in relation to the difficulties associated with public access to Australian Standards. However, it is important to note AS/NZS 3000 has been the applicable standard for electrical wiring in the ACT since at least 2001, with the latest version released in 2007, and further amendments made in 2009 and 2012. The standard is used by electricians in undertaking their work, and in general, the standard can be accessed through relevant membership associations. Public access is available to the standard and a comprehensive guide to the standard through the National Library of Australia. Alternatively, the standard can be purchased through the Standards Australia website in either electronic or paperback versions.

I trust this information addresses the matters raised within your Report for the Bill.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Barr MLA
Treasurer