

4 September 2024

Regulatory Systems (Immigration and Workforce) Amendment Bill review
Education and Workforce Committee
Parliament Buildings, Wellington
Via online portal

Tēnā koe,

Streamlined processes for keeping referenced safety instruments relevant

Powerco is one of Aotearoa's largest gas and electricity distributors, supplying around 357,000 (electricity) and 114,000 (gas) urban and rural homes and businesses in the North Island. These energy networks provide essential services to around 1 million kiwis and will be core to Aotearoa achieving a net-zero economy in 2050.

Developing and maintaining our networks relies on a comprehensive suite of technical standards including international standards, the AS/NZS suite, and other New Zealand safety instruments such as Worksafe Electrical Code of Practice for electrical safe distances (ECP34)¹. There are many examples of outdated references to standards in regulation, and **we support the purpose of the Bill** to enable timely updates to standards referenced in regulations and codes. We particularly support the more streamlined process for Worksafe to update references to standards and instruments - in the Bill Part 1 (Electricity Act) and Part 3 (Gas Act).

We are disappointed that similar provisions are not in the Bill for the Building Act and Building Regulations² to address processes for safety references. For example, ECP34 sets minimum safe distances to protect persons, property, vehicles and mobile plant from harm or damage from electrical hazards. Although it is a legal requirement under the Electricity (Safety) Regulations 2010, it is not referenced in the Building Code. We **recommend that the Committee include provisions in this Bill to enable similar streamlined processes for updating safety references in the Building Act/Regulations.**

If you have any questions regarding this submission please contact Irene Clarke (Irene.Clarke@powerco.co.nz).

Nāku noa, nā,



Emma Wilson
Head of Policy, Regulatory and Markets
POWERCO

¹ <https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/laws-and-regulations/electrical-and-gas-codes-of-practice/electricity-codes-of-practice/>

² Also administered by Ministry for Business Innovation and Employment so within the scope of this Bill.