

ASP General Information

Network Compliance & Authorisations

Alert Number: GI21_21

3 September 2021

Subject: Refresher Training - Expiry and Latitude

Dear ASPs

In April 2020 Ausgrid issued GI14_20 'Extension of Latitude for Refresher Training during COVID-19' detailing Ausgrid's extension of the 1-month latitude to 3-months across all required refresher training, including statutory training.

This notice replaces GI14_20 and aims to provide clarification on Ausgrid's current requirements relating to training.

Training availability and expiry latitude

In response to the current COVID19 pandemic, Ausgrid is aware of several changes and restrictions either implemented or being considered by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) that currently service the ASP market. Such changes may impact the ability of ASPs to satisfy current annual authorisation requirements.

Some noted changes include:

- immediate pause on training delivery until a later date
- reduced training (knowledge only, but no practical); or
- reduced class sizes to meet social distancing requirements.

Due to these changes, Ausgrid understands training through your preferred supplier may no longer be an option at this time.

We also understand where training is available, that potential delays may be experienced in booking into training. Delays may also be experienced in being able to complete the full training requirements (including face-to-face training) by your training expiry date.

As the current COVID-19 situation evolves, it is possible further changes by training providers may be implemented. It is therefore important to remain aware of training provider notifications and to ensure potential delays are considered when booking future training.

Ausgrid has an expectation for companies to make all reasonable attempts to have workers attend refresher training at, or prior to, their training expiry dates. Only where this is not reasonably achievable, then there is leeway for this to be completed during the latitude period.

Given the potential for delays with training availability, **Ausgrid will continue the 3-month latitude across all required refresher training**, including statutory training.

On this basis, Ausgrid will recognise for authorisation purposes, completed training for up to 3-months following the training expiry date.

Pegasus system compliance

Ausgrid's Authorisation Management System (Pegasus) tracks worker competencies and their expiry dates, including refresher training. Once a competency expires, Pegasus will flag any associated Authorisation (role) as expired. This is a fixed and automated function of the system. The Pegasus system cannot currently show any latitude or extension beyond an indicated expiry date.

Whilst the Pegasus system will indicate an authorisation as expired, Ausgrid will at this time, and as an interim arrangement, independently recognise the authority as current for a further 3-months beyond a training expiry date. During this time, the ASP must use best endeavours to undertake all elements of their expired training.

Beyond the 3-month latitude period, Ausgrid will no longer recognise the ASP as authorised.

Note: ASPs who have not completed training by their training expiry date and fall within the 3-month latitude period, must work in accordance with the below stated conditions. Refer to 'Worker and employer responsibilities'.

When Pegasus indicates an authorisation (role) as expired, the following applies:

- a) A worker's authorisation will still be recognised by Ausgrid as compliant, if:
 - o The indicated expired competency(s) relates to refresher training; and
 - o The current date is less than 3-months beyond the expiry date.
- b) A worker's authorisation will no longer be recognised by Ausgrid (i.e. non-compliant), if:
 - o The expired competency(s) does not relate to refresher training e.g. drivers licence/ High risk work licence, sales order etc; **or**
 - o The expired competency(s) are for refresher training and the current date is more than 3-months beyond the expiry date.

Workers must not continue to work once their authorisation is no longer recognised by Ausgrid as compliant!

Implementation of the latitude will be managed by Ausgrid through its Compliance Officers and Installation Inspectors, who when auditing on-site, will check a worker's training currency by scanning the worker's Pegasus ID card. This will identify if the Pegasus system identifies the worker as compliant or if the system indicates an expiry. The Ausgrid auditor will then check any expired competencies to ensure they fall within the current 3-month latitude period. Ausgrid auditors will also ensure workers who fall into the latitude period are working in accordance with the '*Worker and employer responsibilities*' stated below.

Training evidence

Ausgrid is aware that some RTO's may be delivering reduced training. Due to current restrictions, some RTOs have chosen to deliver certain training in multiple stages i.e. knowledge initially with the intent to deliver remaining practical elements, later.

RTO's operating in this manner may be issuing an interim '*Statement of Education*' (or similar) for each completed stage. In this situation a '*Statement of Attainment*' would not be issued by the RTO until the learner has successfully completed **all** aspects of the course i.e. all knowledge and practical components.

Please note that Ausgrid **does not accept** partially completed training for reauthorisation purposes i.e. '*Statement of Education*'. On this basis, Ausgrid requests ASPs not to upload such evidence into Pegasus as it does not comply with Ausgrid's training evidence requirements and further, all non-conforming evidence needs to be escalated and individually assessed, thus slowing down processing for other workers whose evidence may be compliant.

Please note, Ausgrid does accept the following evidence for the purpose of reauthorisation:

1. RTO issued '*Statement of Attainment*' certificate
2. RTO training card showing completed units of competence
3. National Training Passport – evidence from the passport identifying the worker and their RTO validated training.

Worker and employer responsibilities

Utilisation of the extended latitude period will require both workers and their respective employers to adhere to the following. Failure to do so may result in Ausgrid suspending or cancelling an authorisation.

- a) In accordance with Ausgrid's Network Standard 'ES4 Accredited Service Provider Authorisation', there is a requirement for workers to make all reasonable attempts to complete reauthorisation training by their respective training expiry dates. The extended latitude period should only be used as a fall-back option.
- b) Workers who cannot complete reauthorisation training within the standard 1-month latitude period¹ must inform their employer that they have not completed the training and to take steps to complete the training as soon as is reasonable and within the extended latitude period of 3 months.
- c) Workers who are not current with their training by the end of the current 1-month latitude should not act in roles that require this training, particularly safety observers for live work. With regards to live work, where possible, employers should reschedule or redesign the work so that a safety observer or rescuer is not required. If this cannot be reasonably achieved, then electrical work by the worker on or near Ausgrid's electrical network must only be performed in accordance with a documented risk assessment.

¹ As detailed in Ausgrid's Electrical Safety Rules

- d) Per (c), Risk Assessments must factor in currency of a worker's training. Where a worker's training falls out-of-date and beyond the 1-month latitude, employers and persons completing the risk assessments for the task, should consider how long since the worker's training expired, the worker's experience with the required tasks to be performed and the familiarity and confidence that the work team members have in each other. Employers and persons completing the risk assessment must document the competency assessment process undertaken in lieu of recognised training, documenting evidence considered in determining competency, consulting with workers and workers' representatives who will rely on the assessed 'worker' and not proceeding until all parties are satisfied that it is safe to do so.

Employers should inform and remind workers that if they have any concerns regarding their competency or the competency of others, that they should 'Pause' and seek further advice (e.g. Manager / Supervisor) before proceeding. Please note that this change may be revisited at any time and if this occurs, we will advise accordingly.

With regards to Ausgrid training courses, these continue to be delivered but with reduced class sizes to maintain social distancing requirements, and additional hygiene protocols. Due to these changes, some delays in training may be experienced and Ausgrid appreciates your patience during this difficult time.

Ausgrid

Network Compliance & Authorisations