



E3 Transformers Newsletter

Issue Two - April 2010

Newsletters are issued from time to time on behalf of the Equipment Energy Efficiency (E3) Committee. These newsletters will be emailed to a list of stakeholders and uploaded to the transformer page on the energy rating website which can be found at <http://www.transformers.energyrating.gov.au/>.

If you would like to receive each new E3 Transformers Newsletter as it is released, email lelde.vitols@environment.gov.au to be added to the emailing list.

The newsletters are intended to keep industry stakeholders informed and updated about the mandatory Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) for distribution transformers.

1. Brief history of MEPS for transformers

Since 1 October 2004, distribution transformers manufactured in or imported into Australia have been subject to mandatory Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) as set out in AS 2374.1.2-2003. The current scope of transformer MEPS covers oil-immersed and dry-type distribution transformers with power ratings from 10 kVA to 2500 kVA intended to be used on 11 kV and 22 kV networks.

This approach is aimed at increasing energy efficiency by eliminating low efficiency transformers from the market by setting MEPS and encouraging the use of high efficiency transformers. The standard also defines voluntary minimum efficiency levels for "High Efficiency Transformers". Only products which meet the specified efficiency levels can apply this term to promotional or advertising materials. Details of current MEPS for transformers are set out as power efficiency levels at 50% of rated load in AS 2374.1.2, when tested in accordance with AS 2374.1 or AS 2735 as applicable. For more information, see <http://www.energyrating.gov.au/transformers2.html>

2. Progress on MEPS 2 for distribution transformers

A draft Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) for increasing the stringency of MEPS for distribution transformers, adding 33kV network transformers and extending the scope to transformers up to 3150kVA has been delayed due to further requirements for information.

As a result of these delays the E3 Committee has now decided to advise stakeholders that MEPS 2 for transformers will not be introduced before October 2011. Further advice about timing of consultations and the release of the consultation RIS for transformers will be provided as soon as a more precise timeline is available.

3. Compliance work on MEPS for transformers

Distribution transformers have been subject to MEPS since 2004. The process of check testing distribution transformers for compliance with MEPS can be more difficult than for other products. Transformers are relatively large and unwieldy and are generally ordered directly from manufacturers and cannot be easily transported to testing facilities. In the past some check testing was carried out by borrowing transformers held in storage by electricity distribution companies and several other approaches are now being explored.

Recently CalTest carried out field testing trials under particularly hot weather conditions in South Australia. These field tests provided loss determinations that closely matched those obtained through controlled laboratory testing despite the extreme heat. Following the success of those field trials CalTest is testing some transformers in the storage facilities of a South Australian utility. The aim of this preliminary work is to develop practical approaches that could lead to a comprehensive transformer check testing program.

E3 has been keen to respond to industry concerns about the possibility of non-compliant distribution transformers being brought into the country. As a response, the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency (DCCEE) on behalf of E3 has negotiated with the Australian Customs Service for an entry message to be sent to importers when they declare that they are importing goods that fall into in the tariff classifications that include transformers covered by MEPS. This message advises importers that they may be subject to mandatory MEPS obligations.

4. Next steps

A Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement is expected to be released for public comment in mid 2010.

5. Conclusion

For further information, please see the www.energyrating.gov.au website or email Lelde Vitols, lelde.vitols@environment.gov.au

If you wish to be added to or removed from the newsletter distribution list, please let us know.