Serving all electricity customers

Public Safety Strategy and Action Plan

2017-2020

Educating the public to act safely near electricity

www.esbnetworks.ie
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Who are we?
ESB Networks builds, operates, maintains and develops the electricity network in Ireland. A vital part of our job is to educate and protect the public from injury from the electricity networks. This is a requirement of our license and is enshrined in our Public Safety Policy (see Appendix 1). We meet this requirement through the delivery of the Networks Works Programme, implementation of our public safety systems and delivery of Public Safety Action Plans.

What is the Public Safety Strategy and Action Plan?
The strategy and action plan sets out how we plan to raise awareness among the public about the dangers of coming into close contact with electricity networks and equipment. In addition each local division (there are five CSM divisions) is required to support the delivery of this plan and to implement a Divisional Public Safety Plan based on the priorities set down here. Our aim is to reduce the number of accidents and ‘near misses’ involving the public.

Who is the plan aimed at?
The plan is aimed at:
• people at risk of coming into contact with the electricity network due to their work such as farmers, construction workers, emergency services, local authority workers and other utility workers (we call these our stakeholders); and
• the general public, including children, who may come into close contact with the electricity network through fallen wires or when involved in sport and leisure activities.

How will the plan be carried out?
There are four ‘pillars’ to the strategy and a number of actions under each pillar:

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<td>We will monitor the maintenance and other work on the electricity network to make sure that all public safety elements are completed.</td>
<td>We will build relationships with groups representing our stakeholders to encourage them to promote safety around electricity networks to their members.</td>
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What is the strategy and action plan for the Work Programmes?

This strategy and action plan involves:
• monthly assessments by the public safety team of how well the public safety works programme is being implemented;
• monthly analysis by the public safety team of public electricity incidents including fallen electricity wires and incidents where underground electricity cables have been disturbed (‘cable strikes’);
• monthly publication of performance information related to public safety (for internal staff under Pillar 4 of the Public Safety Strategy);
• quarterly reviews with senior management of public safety activities connected with the works programme;
• audits of public safety processes to make sure they work as they should. These processes include:
  o ‘stop work notices’ – safety notices issued when ESB Networks sees someone carrying out unsafe work near overhead lines,
  o ‘dial before you dig’ – a helpdesk to request maps of where cables are located, and
  o shrouding – where ESB Networks cover electrical wires – so that customers can carry out work on their houses.

What is the strategy and action plan for stakeholders?

We have developed a separate strategy and action plan for each of our stakeholder groups. These are described in detail in the following sections. However, the main points are:

1 We need to identify the relevant key people in each organisation and industry group and agree a partnership arrangement with them, involving attending events, and conferences, availing of advertising opportunities and providing educational programmes and content.

2 We need to develop educational materials for each representative group which they can then deliver to their members. These ‘self-help’ resources will include videos, brochures and presentations.

3 We need to create an easily accessible ‘hub’ on the ESB Networks website for these educational materials.
Stakeholder Education and Awareness

1. Farming

We have developed strong connections with the farming sector in recent years. In 2016 and 2017, we plan to consolidate a number of current commitments and activities into a smaller number of significant projects that will enable us to reach the maximum number of people while allowing time to focus on other sectors.

These primary partnerships will be with the Irish Farmers Journal, National Ploughing Championships & Teagasc.

Irish Farmers Journal:
The renewal of the sponsorship of ‘Safe Family Farms’ gives us a weekly safety page, four full page advertisements, involvement in events, and digital and social media support.

National Ploughing Championships:
We had a large marquee at the 2016 championships where we offered customer service and farm safety advice. We were able to engage directly with large numbers of farmers. We plan to have a similar programme of events in 2017.

Teagasc:
We will continue our work with Teagasc and the 3rd level agricultural colleges, giving talks on electrical safety to students in all the colleges and running a safety competition for students. We will also look to work with the colleges to incorporate a module on electrical safety into their core curriculum.

We will also work with other organisations and representative groups in the agricultural sector.

These organisations include:
- the Irish Farmers’ Association (IFA);
- the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine;
- the Health and Safety Authority.

We will use the ESB Networks website and social media pages (Twitter, Instagram and YouTube) to ‘push out’ safety information to farmers and the farming industry.
Stakeholder Education and Awareness

2. Construction

Who are our stakeholders?
Our main stakeholder is the Construction Industry Federation. We will develop a partnership with them to influence their education programmes and explore opportunities to communicate our safety message to the construction sector.

Our other stakeholders include:
- the planning permission sections of local authorities;
- the Society of Chartered Surveyors of Ireland;
- the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland;
- Engineers Ireland;
- the Office of Public Works (OPW);
- the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government.

We will develop educational material (videos, brochures and presentations) for these organisations so that they can upskill their members and staff.

We will provide content for lessons on electrical safety for the following institutions:
- National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO);
- SOLAS (The Further Education Authority);
- Institutes of Technology in Kevin Street and Bolton Street;
- University College Dublin (UCD) and Dublin City University (DCU).

We will:
- identify relevant publications and websites to advertise in; and
- create a library of educational materials on our website and social media pages aimed at the construction sector.
“In general, the public has an insufficient understanding of the dangers associated with the electricity network. We need to educate people”
Stakeholder Education and Awareness

3. Emergency services

We will develop relationships with the following emergency service agencies (listed in order of priority):

• Chief Fire Officers’ Association
• An Garda Síochána
• National Ambulance Service
• Civil Defence
• Army
• Air Corps
• Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)
• Irish Water Safety

We will develop educational material (videos, brochures and presentations) for each group so they can upskill their members and staff.

4. Local authorities

We will develop relationships with the following groups:

• County and City Management Association
• Directors of services for local authorities
• Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government
• Office of Public Works (OPW)
• Transport Infrastructure Ireland

We will develop educational material (videos, brochures and presentations) for each group so they can upskill their members and staff.

5. Utilities & other organisations

We will engage with Telecommunications providers, starting with Eir (previously Eircom) to:

• set up a national point of contact to report on unsafe situations when telecommunication (Eir) poles are located too close to electricity poles;
• develop a charter of service to resolve conflicts; and
• develop educational material on the risks posed by conflicts to be used by Eir in their apprentice and other training programmes.
We will develop relationships with utilities and organisations, including:
- Gas Networks Ireland
- Irish Rail
- Virgin (UPC)
- SKY
- Vodafone
- Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg)
- Commission for Energy Regulation (CER)
- Health and Safety Authority (H.S.A)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

We will develop educational material (videos, brochures and presentations) for each organisation to upskill their staff.

What is the strategy and action plan for the public?

Market research has identified that the public has an insufficient understanding of the potential dangers associated with the electricity network. We need to educate people, including children, about these dangers and how to act safely at all times.

We will continue to deliver media campaigns and specific sports and leisure activities where there is a higher risk to the public.

Public Education and Awareness

1. General Public

Television
This is the most effective way to reach larger audiences. We will continue with the TV campaign to build general public safety awareness of the electricity network.

Radio
We will continue to use our existing radio ads at the appropriate time of year. These ads deal with situations including fallen wires, bunting, flooding and gardening. We will develop new radio ads as specific needs arise.

Social media and website
We will use our website and social media channels to deliver relevant and seasonal public safety messages.
Public Education and Awareness

2. Sports and leisure

Sports
• We will create targeted social media messages relating to:
  ✓ kites, toy planes and drones (small remote controlled devices – mini helicopters) that can come too close to electricity wires;
  ✓ hang gliders, parachutes and hot air balloons;
  ✓ fishing and sailing on lakes;
  ✓ the use of bunting to support teams.
• We will develop educational material for specific sporting organisations which they can share with their members.

Gardening
• We will use our existing radio and television ads to highlight the electricity dangers related to gardening and hedgecutting.
• We will develop a social media campaign using Twitter and Instagram to communicate to our public safety messages.
• We will explore the option of having a presence at Bloom (large garden festival organised by Bord Bia) in 2017.

DIY
• We will create targeted social media messages focusing on seasonal DIY (do-it-yourself) activities.
• We will explore the option of asking DIY stores such as Woodies and B&Q to promote our public safety messages through their social media channels.
Public Education and Awareness

3. Schools

Primary schools
- We will continue to roll out and extend our primary schools programme “Stay Safe, Stay Clear” which consists of distributing 80,000 high visibility vests to children starting Junior Infants in September in partnership with the RSA. Staff visits to local schools and a colouring competing (with a calendar of winning entries created each year) are also part of this programme.
- We will use social media to promote the schools programme.
- We will roll out a public relations programme to highlight the high-vis vests and schools programmes.
- We will encourage more ESB Networks staff to support this programme by volunteering to visit local schools.
- We will continue to take part in the Health and Safety Authority’s Keep Safe Programme. This involves 12 visits a year covering 3 to 4 schools on each visit.
- We will develop new, more engaging lesson plans for schools.

Secondary schools
- We will develop a proposal for a Public Safety intervention for second-level schools. This will involve research and development to see what would work best and how it would work. This may include a Transition Year (TY) Project and essay competition.

What does the strategy and action plan mean for ESB Networks staff?

We need to educate and inform staff about our public safety initiatives and what they can do to improve public safety. This will include:
- developing a presentation and video for Safety Week on:
  ✓ the importance of public safety;
  ✓ ESB Networks public safety activities; and
  ✓ how staff can get involved;
- including information on public safety Incidents and news in the monthly safety brief with a more in-depth examination every six months;
- providing more information on public safety initiatives on the intranet;
- publishing regular articles on public safety in the Electric Mail (EM) – a news magazine for ESB Network staff;
Appendix 1 – Our Licence Obligations and Public Safety Policy

What does our licence say?

We operate the distribution system under a licence granted by the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER). The licence says that we must:
• do all we reasonably can to protect people and property from injury and damage while we are carrying out our work;
• have a technical and safety audit of the distribution system carried out every three years by an independent expert approved by the CER;
• give the results of the audits to the CER.

What does our public safety policy say?

• We must obey all public safety standards, policies, legislation and regulations when working on the networks system.
• We must make sure our networks, systems and equipment are designed, built, operated and maintained to minimise, as far as practicable, all safety risks to the public.
• We must make the public aware of the potential safety risks associated with our networks, systems and equipment.
• We must investigate thoroughly all major incidents where the public come into contact with, or near contact with, our networks, systems, or equipment.
We will create targeted social media messages focussing on seasonal DIY activities