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Independent Forensic Electrical Engineering | Compliance | Expert Opinion

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Electrical Defects Discovered After Buying a Property

Noncompliant electrical work sometimes emerges only after a property has changed hands. Examples include unsafe wiring, altered switchboards, unprotected circuits, undocumented additions, or work that appears inconsistent with the Electricity Act 1992, Electricity (Safety) Regulations 2010, AS/NZS 3000, or other requirements applicable at the time.

The immediate response is often to repair the issue. But if the issue may have existed before the property was purchased, its condition may be important in establishing when it arose, what caused it, and who may be responsible. Repairing the work before it is documented or assessed may remove that evidence. The following should be established:

- When was the work carried out?
- What requirements applied at the time?
- Was the work inspected, tested, and certified where required?
- Has the installation been altered since?

These questions cannot always be answered from the defect alone. Electrical testing, photographs, compliance records, equipment condition, and the surrounding installation may all help establish what occurred.

Key point

Make the installation safe but preserve the evidence.

Where significant electrical defects are discovered after a property purchase, an independent electrical assessment can help establish the condition, identify compliance issues, and preserve relevant technical evidence before repairs or alterations are made.

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