SIGN14 – Information Sheet

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Version 1.0

Overview

CER Checklist item: SIGN14

Where a “Disconnection Point” has been provided, the sign "WARNING: LOADS MUST BE ISOLATED AND CIRCUIT MUST BE TESTED FOR THE ABSENCE OF CURRENT BEFORE UNPLUGGING" is not attached to both the positive and negative cable within 100 mm of the disconnection point of the PV string, or the minimum text size is 10 mm.

Standard reference: AS/NZS 5033:2021 Clause 5.5.2.2.

1. Introduction

SAA has analysed Clean Energy Regulator (CER) inspection data to identify the most common areas of non-compliance. Based on these insights, we have developed educational resources that highlight where issues typically arise and offer practical guidance to support installers in achieving compliance. This document should be read in conjunction with the relevant Standard(s).

SIGN14 shall comply with the requirements of AS/NZS 5033:2021 Clause 5.5.2.2.

This document outlines the key requirements for correct installation of equipment and includes examples of observed non-compliances to highlight common installation errors and help prevent their recurrence.

Figure 1: Compliant Warning labels applied to both positive and negative cables within 100mm of the disconnection point, using stainless steel ties.

2. Key Requirements for compliant SIGN14 & SIGN 15

SIGN 14

AS/NZS 5033:2021 Clause 5.5.2.2 Disconnection point

A sign containing the following text shall be attached to both the positive and negative cable within 100 mm of the disconnection point of the PV string:

WARNING: LOADS MUST BE ISOLATED AND CIRCUIT MUST BE TESTED FOR THE ABSENCE OF CURRENT BEFORE UNPLUGGING

NOTE 1 See Figure A.4(c).

SIGN 15

A sign containing the following text shall be attached to the PV module or structure within 300 mm of the disconnection point to identify the location of the disconnection point:

WARNING: PV STRING DISCONNECTION POINT

NOTE 2 See Figure A.4(d).

The text shall be with a minimum letter size of 10 mm.

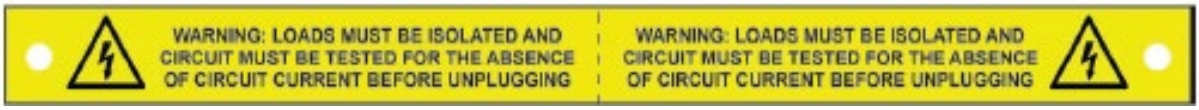

Figure 2: Example of a compliant label.

3. Common non-compliances identified with this CER checklist item

3.1 Label is not installed on both the positive and negative disconnection devices, the label is not durable or plastic ties used to fix the label to the cable.

Figure 3: One label used across both conductors, fixed with plastic ties, this is non-compliant.

Figure 4: With one label across the disconnection point and the label not durable for the location, this is non-compliant.

a) **Non-compliance**: It is frequently observed, as shown in Figures 3 and 4, that installers are not correctly applying warning labels to both the positive and negative cable. Installing a single label across both cables is non-compliant. In addition, some installers are using plastic cable ties to secure labels; these are unsuitable for the installation environment, as they degrade under UV exposure and may fail over time.

Where a label is missing, incorrectly fixed, or has detached due to inadequate securing methods, it becomes difficult to clearly identify the disconnection point and determine which conductors must be disconnected to safely isolate the PV string.

As a warning label, this signage plays a critical safety role. It is intended to inform and warn the person operating the disconnection point and provide a final prompt to confirm that the PV array has been safely isolated. Operating a disconnection point under load can result in a significant arc flash, posing serious electrical safety risks and the potential for damage to system components.

Figure 4 illustrates a label affixed across the disconnection point itself, preventing operation unless the label is first removed. This arrangement is non-compliant with multiple requirements of the CER inspection checklist and undermines the intended function of the warning label.

Furthermore, the labels shown appear to be of substandard quality and may not be suitable for the expected operational life of the system, increasing the likelihood of deterioration, loss of legibility, or complete failure over time.

b) **Best Practice**: Understanding both the requirements of the standard and the purpose of this warning label is essential to maintaining compliance. A warning label must be fixed to both the positive and negative cable, within 100mm of the disconnection point, using stainless steel cable ties, as shown in Figures 1 and 5. One label is required per conductor; a single label applied across both cables is not acceptable.

These labels are typically supplied in grid-connected sticker kits, which are commonly configured for a two-string system and therefore usually include only four labels. For larger systems, installers should ensure additional kits are ordered or that spare individual labels and stainless-steel cable ties are kept in the work vehicle to avoid shortages during installation.

This task forms part of the installation process and must be completed while on site. Installers should not leave site without fitting these labels or with the intention of returning later, as this step is easily overlooked and may result in non-compliance being identified during inspection.

To ensure long-term compliance, SAA recommends the use of UV-stable, engraved multi-layer plastic labels (commonly referred to as Traffolyte) or equivalent materials. Labels must be suitable for the expected operational life of the system and capable of withstanding harsh environmental conditions without loss of legibility or durability.

Figure 5: Compliant Labels correctly applied to both the positive and negative cable within 100mm of the disconnection point using stainless steel ties. Labels are UV stable and engraved.