

Electrical Contractors Association

A Trade Association Affiliated to the Construction Industry
Federation



Submission in Respect of a Sectoral Employment Order in the Electrical Contracting Sector

29th June 2021

Chairman and Members of the Labour Court.

This submission is made on behalf of the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) following the publication of the Court's intention to conduct an examination into terms and conditions in the electrical contracting sector pursuant to section 15 of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015.

The ECA is a trade association affiliated to the Construction Industry Federation (CIF). The CIF is an authorised trade union and the holder of a negotiation licence. The ECA consists of approximately 40 members, who range in size from small, medium to large, and who employ substantial numbers of electricians and apprentices. In value terms ECA members carry out approximately 80% of all electrical projects in both the public and private sectors in the State.

In principle, ECA supports the establishment of a Sectoral Employment Order (SEO) to cover remuneration and pensions' assurance and sick pay for electricians and apprentices working in the electrical contracting sector.

Background

ECA, the Association of Electrical Contractors of Ireland (AECI) and Connect Trade Union are parties to the Electrical National Joint Industrial Council (ENJIC). In 2019 these three organisations made a joint application to the Labour Court under s.14 of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act, 2015 to examine the terms and conditions of employment for electricians and electrical apprentices. Following this application, SI No 251 Sectoral Employment Order (Electrical Contracting Sector) 2019 was introduced. On 23rd June 2020, the High Court set aside this Order following a constitutional challenge taken by the National Electrical Contractors Ireland (NECI) (reference 2019 No. 280 J.R). Despite the striking down of the electrical SEO, ECA members continue to observe the terms of that SEO in terms of rates of pay and the provision of a pension and sick pay scheme.

ECA, the AECI and Connect Trade Union were parties to the Registered Employment Agreement (REA) for the electrical contracting sector. This Agreement was entered in the Register of Employment Agreements on 24th September 1990 and was varied on numerous occasions thereafter.

Agreements between employers and electricians go back as far as 1922 and several agreements were entered into between the ECA, AECI and Connect Trade Union up to the date of the introduction of the first REA in the sector in 1990. All negotiations took place under the Electrical National Joint Industrial Council (ENJIC). The ENJIC, which is open to all employer and trade union representatives in the sector, is chaired by a representative from the Workplace Relations Commission.

The REAs and the SEO set legally binding rates of pay and conditions of employment for electricians and electrical apprentices. They enabled contractors to tender on a level playing field in terms of labour costs and they provided fair rates of pay for electrical workers. Labour costs account for approximately 40% of the cost of a project and, therefore, a mechanism to ensure that contractors can compete for work on a level playing field with regard to labour costs is essential in a sector where competition for work is intense.

The Supreme Court Judgment in May 2013 in the McGowan case had the effect of striking down the electrical REA. This situation left a vacuum in the sector which resulted in difficulties in tendering and uncertainty in terms of dispute resolution procedures. ECA, therefore, welcomed the introduction of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015 which provided a new mechanism for establishing legally binding rates of pay and pensions/sick pay in the electrical contracting sector. Most importantly, in a sector employing approximately 17,000 workers, the SEO provided a legally binding dispute resolution procedure. Legally binding dispute resolution procedures are essential in assisting the parties resolve disputes in an orderly way without recourse to industrial action. With the setting aside of the electrical SEO by the High Court in 2020, the sector is once again faced with difficulties in terms of tendering for work and uncertainty and instability in terms of a legally binding dispute resolution procedures.

SEO in the Electrical Contracting Sector

ECA is supportive of an SEO in the electrical contracting sector for the following reasons:

- It is a normal and desirable practice to have terms and conditions relating to remuneration, pensions and sick pay in the electrical contracting sector. ECA and AECI traditionally entered into agreements with the Connect Trade union on rates of pay and terms and conditions of employment. These three organisations were parties to the previously registered employment agreement for the electrical contracting sector. ECA, AECI and Connect Trade Union were also joint applicants to the Labour Court under s.14 of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act, 2015 which resulted in S.I. 251 Sectoral Employment Order (Electrical Contracting Sector) 2019.
- Prior to the striking down of REAs in 2013 and the setting aside of the electrical SEO in 2020, it was a statutory requirement for electricians and electrical apprentices over the age of 20 to be registered in a pension and sick pay scheme. Electricians and electrical apprentices are hourly paid workers and are, therefore, paid in accordance with hours worked. A sick pay scheme whereby workers can receive payment for absences due to illness is undoubtedly beneficial to the workers concerned. ECA is also supportive of a pension scheme that provides income on retirement to electricians. ECA is supportive of a scheme that provides benefits equal to, or greater than, those provided by the Construction Workers Pension Scheme (CWPS) (see Appendix 1). The CWPS was set up for workers in the construction industry. It is a defined contribution scheme with a hybrid element, and it is transferable. The Scheme has won numerous awards and was regarded as providing the best value for money in the industry. The CWPS is a non-profit scheme and any surplus made is put back into the Scheme.
- An SEO in the electrical contracting sector which sets legally binding rates of pay and provides for pensions and sick pay will undoubtedly promote harmonious relations between employers and workers in the sector.
- An SEO will provide a means for the orderly resolution of disputes. ECA members carry out the vast majority, if not all, of the electrical work associated with the large multi-national firms investing in Ireland. These sites, along with all other sites under public and private contracts, employ large numbers of electrical workers. A means of resolving disputes in an orderly fashion is essential to ensure projects are completed on time and within budget.
- An SEO will provide certainty and stability to contractors, electricians and clients as it will establish rate of pay and conditions of employment for a minimum of one year.

- The tendering process, whereby electrical contractors tender to the principal contractor for work, contributes to intensifying competition between contractors. The absence of legally binding terms and conditions for electricians employed by electrical contractors will undoubtedly lead to an erosion of the quality of employment conditions in the sector as competition between electrical contractors to win work intensifies. Where intense competition for work exists, the cost of investing in training is critically examined by employers. An SEO would set legally binding rates which would eliminate the opportunity to erode employment conditions as a means of securing projects.
- As the economy continues to recover from the effects of Covid-19, activity in the sector will increase. Investment in new technologies, training and health and safety will be required to ensure the sector can continue to deliver a high-quality product. Where labour is taken out of competition, investment in new technologies and training will be required to provide contractors with a competitive advantage when tendering for work.
- Employment levels in the sector are determined by the level of work available. As the economy continues to recover there will be a greater need for new entrants. A sector that provides good quality employment, with reasonable and sustainable rates of pay and conditions of employment will entice new entrants into the apprenticeship system.
- The absence of legally binding rates of pay and conditions of employment will provide contractors from outside the State with a lower cost base with a competitive advantage over Irish electrical contractors. An SEO will ensure that all electrical contractors, including those from outside the State, can tender for work on a level playing field.

Content of the SEO

In principle, ECA supports the establishment of an SEO. The Association is supportive of realistic and sustainable rates of pay, pensions and sick pay for electricians and apprentices in the electrical contracting sector.

We respectfully request the Court to consider the following in their examination of terms and conditions in the sector:

- In general, over the last 15 months, the construction industry has been in lockdown for 23 weeks due to Covid-19. While many members of ECA were working on essential services sites and, therefore, continued to work over this period, many small-to-medium sized members of the Association were shut-down. For those contractors who continued working on essential services sites, the costs associated with staggered working hours to ensure social distancing, etc, were substantial. Where sites were closed, costs continued to accrue in terms of security, insurance, etc.
- The uncertainty caused by the pandemic has had a detrimental effect on the supply of materials. Manufacturing facilities around the world were also closed for long periods of time with the result that materials were not available when work re-commenced. In accordance with the laws of economics, the scarcity of supplies has led to an increase in costs. The majority of projects that our members are currently working on were awarded on a fixed-price basis. An unsustainable increase in

labour costs at this time will add to the existing inflationary pressures because materials and labour are the main cost components on a project.

- In addition to the above, employers are facing increases in labour costs with the introduction of statutory sick pay. While the construction industry is currently the only sector within the private sector that has a mandatory sick pay scheme, employers in the sector are facing an increase of approximately 2.3% in labour costs to meet the terms of the proposed statutory sick pay scheme, albeit on an incremental basis.
- Direct employment continues to be the standard in the electrical contracting sector. The training of apprentices is hugely important to electrical contractors to ensure standards are upheld and a quality product is delivered. Setting remuneration at unsustainable levels will only serve to erode the good working conditions and quality employment provided if the cost of maintaining the current model is seen as prohibitive.

ECA recognises that remuneration costs that are out of line with other sectors of the industry will erode the standards that currently exist and will lead to a more fragmented sector. The majority of members of the ECA also carry out mechanical work i.e. the mechanical and electrical sectors are closely aligned. The rates of pay for mechanical and electrical workers also tend to be closely aligned. The last increase in pay for electricians was on 1st September 2019 with the introduction of the first SEO in the electrical sector. Mechanical workers received an increase in hourly rates in September 2020 with the result that the current rates of pay for electricians are 2.3% behind the mechanical rates.

ECA recognises that an increase in hourly rates is warranted. Taking all of the above arguments into consideration, we believe that an increase in pay of 2.3% is realistic. This percentage increase will bring electricians back into line with mechanical workers. An increase over and above 2.3% is unsustainable in the current economic environment due to fixed price contracts and the substantial increases in material costs facing all contractors.

With regard to the content of the SEO, we respectfully make the following submission:

Definition of Economic Sector

The Electrical Contracting Sector means the sector of the economy comprising the following economic activity:

The installation, alteration, repair, demolition (de-install), fabrication and prefabrication, commissioning or maintenance of electrical and electronic equipment including the marking off and preparing for the wiring (whether temporary or permanent) of all electrical and/or electronic appliances and apparatus, fitting and erecting all controllers, switches, junction section distribution and other fuseboards and all electrical communications, bells, telephone, radio, telegraph, x-ray, computer and data cabling, instrumentation, fibre optics and kindred installations; fitting and fixing of metallic and other conduits, perforated cable tray and casing for protection of cables, cutting away of walls, floors and ceilings, etc, for same; erection, care and maintenance of all electrical plant, including generators, motors, oil burners, cranes, lifts, fans, refrigerators and hoists; adjustments of all control, rheostats, coils and all electrical contacts and connections; wiring of chassis for all vehicles; erection of batteries and switchboards; erection of crossarms, insulators, overhead

cables (LT and HT); fitting of staywires, brackets, lightning arrestors, etc, and underground mains having regard to any advances in technology and equipment use within the industry.

Definition of a Worker

A worker has the following meaning: -

Any person aged 15 years or more who has entered into or works under a contract with an employer, whether the contract be for manual labour, clerical work or otherwise, whether it be expressed or implied, oral or in writing, and whether it be a contract of service or of apprenticeship or a contract personally to execute any work or labour.

For the purpose of this definition, apprentice and apprenticeship has the same meaning as it has in the Industrial Training Act 1967.

Scope

We respectfully request that the Sectoral Employment Order applies to the following categories of worker who are directly employed or employed through an employment agency within the meaning of the Employment Agency Act 1971 and/or the Protection of Employees (Temporary Agency Work) Act 2012 in the electrical contracting sector: -

Qualified electricians and registered apprentice electricians working in the Sector

Hourly Rates of Pay

Electricians

The current hourly rates of pay were agreed between ECA, AECI and Connect Trade Union. These rates are set out at Appendix 2. Based on the points raised above, ECA is firmly of the view that an increase in rates of not greater than 2.3% should be applied to the electricians' pay scale, with the 1st, 3rd and 6th year out of time rates to be included in the SEO. This increase should take effect from the introduction of the SEO.

ECA, therefore, submits that the following rates should apply from the introduction of the SEO:

Category 1	€24.03
Category 2	€24.51
Category 3	€24.90

Apprentices

We respectfully request the Court to amend the current percentage relativity between apprentices and electricians. Currently apprentices are entitled to the following percentage of the first year out of time rate:

1 st year apprentice	30%
2 nd year apprentice	45%
3 rd year apprentice	65%
4 th year apprentice	80%

We request the Court to amend the above relativities to the following:

1 st year apprentice	40%
2 nd year apprentice	50%
3 rd year apprentice	60%
4 th year apprentice	70%

The re-balancing of apprentice rates is required for the following reasons:

- Increasing the 1st year hourly rate will help to entice apprentices into the sector.
- A reduction in the 3rd and 4th year apprentice rates will encourage these apprentices to work towards completing exams in a timely manner. The current 3rd and 4th year rates are relatively high at €15.27 and €18.79 respectively. There is, therefore, little incentive for 3rd and 4th year apprentices to complete exams.
- The proposed re-balancing of the current apprentice rates set out above will not affect the apprentice's pay over the duration of the apprenticeship i.e. the apprentice will receive the approximately the same total pay over the duration of the apprenticeship as set out below:

	Current Relativities (Including an increase of 2.3%) €	Proposed Re-Balancing (Including an increase of 2.3%) €
1 st year	14,621.88	19,489.08
2 nd year	21,922.68	24,376.56
3 rd year	31,677.36	29,243.76
4 th year	38,978.16	34,110.96
Total	107,200.08	107,220.36

Normal Working Week

The normal working week is 39 hours, Monday to Friday.

Normal Daily Working Hours

The normal daily working hours are 8 hours of work undertaken between the hours of 7am (normal weekday starting time and 5pm (normal weekday finishing time) Monday – Thursday inclusive and between the hours of 7am (normal Friday starting time) and 4pm (normal Friday finishing time) on Friday.

Overtime

Hours worked between normal finishing time and midnight Monday to Friday	Time plus a half
Hours worked between midnight and normal starting time Monday to Friday	Double time
The first 4 hours worked on Saturday where work commences any time between 7am and 9am	Time plus a half
All other hours worked on Saturday	Double time
All hours worked on Sunday	Double time
All hours worked on public holidays	Double time

Unsocial Hours Worked

Where for specific projects, hours are required to differ from those set out at “Normal Daily Working Hours” above, the following rates should apply:

Where starting time is before 1pm	8 hours at time plus a quarter
Where starting time is after 1pm	8 hours at time plus a third

Pensions / Death-in-Service / Sick Pay

ECA members continue to support the principle of pensions, sick pay and death-in-service for electrical workers who are agreed between 20 and 65. A pension and sick pay scheme formed part of the previously registered employment agreement and SEO. The current contribution rates set by the Construction Workers Pension Scheme are set out below. These are the contributions rates which ECA members are currently applying:

Pension Contributions

<i>Employer Contribution</i>	<i>Worker Contribution</i>	<i>Total Combined Employer and Worker Contributions</i>
€5.32 per day to a maximum of €26.63 per week	€3.52 per day to a maximum of €17.76 per week	€8.84 per day to a maximum of €44.39 per week

Death-in-Service Contributions

<i>Employer Contribution</i>	<i>Worker Contribution</i>	<i>Total Combined Contribution</i>
€1.11 per day to a maximum of €1.11 per week	€1.11 per day to a maximum of €1.11 per week	€2.22 per day to a maximum of €2.22 per week

Sick Pay Scheme

<i>Employer Contribution</i>	<i>Worker Contribution</i>	<i>Total Combined Contribution</i>
€1.27 per day to a maximum of €1.27 per week	€0.63 per day to a maximum of €0.63 per week	€1.90 per day to a maximum of €1.90 per week

ECA propose that the pension contribution rates set out above increase in line with the increase in hourly rates. The Association does not propose any increases to the Death-in-Service contributions or contributions to the Sick Pay Scheme at this time.

For your information, the main features of the Construction Workers Pension Scheme are attached at Appendix 1.

Dispute Resolution Procedures

ECA respectfully submit that the following dispute resolution procedures should apply to any disputes that may arise:

If a dispute occurs between workers to whom the SEO relates and their employers, no strike or lock-out, or other form of industrial action shall take place until the following procedures have been complied with. All sides are obliged to fully comply with the terms of the disputes procedure.

Individual Dispute

- a) The grievance or dispute shall in the first instance be raised with the employer at local level with a requirement to respond within 5 working days. Notice in writing of the dispute shall be given by the individual concerned or his trade union to the relevant organisation representing employers or to the employer directly.
- b) If the dispute is not resolved, it shall be referred to the Adjudication Service of the WRC.
- c) Either party can appeal the outcome of the Adjudication Hearing to the Labour Court.

Collective Dispute

- a) The grievance or dispute shall be raised in the first instance with the employers with a requirement to respond within 5 working days. Notice in writing of the dispute shall be given by the workers concerned or their trade union to the relevant organisation representing employers, or to the employer directly.
- b) If the dispute is not resolved the issue shall be referred to the Conciliation Service of the WRC.
- c) If the issue remains unresolved, it shall be referred to the Labour Court for investigation and recommendation.

Travel Allowances

In the event that travel allowances form part of the Court's examination into terms and conditions for workers in the electrical contracting sector, ECA submits that Association members are strongly opposed to travelling allowances being included in an SEO for the following reasons:

- Travel allowances were not provided for in any SEO introduced since 2017, namely:
 - o The first SEO in the construction sector, introduced in 2017
 - o The current SEO in the mechanical sector, introduced in 2018
 - o The second SEO in the construction sector, introduced in 2019
 - o The SEO in the electrical sector, introduced in 2019
- The mechanical and electrical sectors are closely linked, and many electrical contractors also operate in the mechanical sector. To include travel allowances in a new SEO in the electrical sector would undoubtedly lead to knock-on claims in the mechanical sector.
- The provision of a travel allowance in an SEO in the electrical sector would also lead to knock-on claims in the general construction sector, which in turn could lead to industrial unrest.

- To introduce sector-wide travelling allowances now would result in significant costs and place an undue financial burden on electrical companies who are not members of ECA.
- While many ECA members currently pay a travel allowance, with the first hour incorporated into the rate, the current practice in the industry is that many contractors pay a subsistence allowance/country money to workers who are transferred to sites which are over 20 miles from the contractor's base. This payment is €182 approx. (tax free) per week and is made in accordance with Revenue Commissioner Guidelines.

In Conclusion

ECA is supportive of an SEO in the electrical contracting sector. An SEO will ensure that contractors can tender on a level playing field with regard to labour costs; it will also ensure that electrical workers receive good terms and conditions of employment commensurate with their skills and training. An SEO that sets realistic and sustainable rates of pay and terms and conditions of employment will ensure that the sector continues to attract bright young people. Where the cost of labour is taken out of competition, electrical contractors will continue to invest in training and new technologies to ensure a competitive edge.

It is essential, however, that remuneration is set at sustainable levels. The scarcity and cost of construction materials is currently causing inflationary pressures. Increasing remuneration to unsustainable levels will further add to these existing inflationary pressures. The vast majority of tenders are awarded on a fixed-price basis and, therefore, increases in costs cannot be recovered. ECA recognise that electricians are due an increase in pay. However, the Association is extremely concerned that any increase in pay in excess of 2.3% would threaten the viability of many electrical contractors in the current environment. An increase in hourly rates of 2.3% would ensure that electricians are not out of line with other craftspeople in the industry.

END

APPENDIX 1

Construction Workers Pension Scheme (CWPS)

ECA is seeking the inclusion of a pension and sick pay scheme for electricians and apprentices who are aged between 20 and 65. We are also seeking the option to calculate contributions on a daily or weekly basis. Our submission relating to pensions and sick pay is set out hereunder.

Every employer to whom the SEO applies shall participate in an SEO pension scheme that meets the pensions' requirements of the SEO.

Pension Scheme Structure

The pension scheme to which the SEO applies ("SEO pension scheme") should include the following features and benefits:

1. An SEO pension scheme should be an Occupational Pension Scheme which is registered with and regulated by the Pensions Authority.
2. Recognising the flexible nature of employment across employers within the construction sector and related industries (the Sector), an SEO pension scheme should be established as a multi-employer scheme open to all employers in the Sector.
3. Whilst a member remains employed within the Sector, members should be able to have a single individual pension account within the SEO pension scheme thereby enabling successive employers of the member to contribute to the member's account provided the employer has joined itself to the SEO pension scheme.
4. Where an employee member leaves service of an employer, the contributions which have been paid by the employee and the employer in respect of the member will be retained in full within the SEO pension scheme in the individual account of that member.

5. The rules of an SEO pension scheme should not permit a member to take a refund of their own contributions prior to reaching retirement age.
6. Bodies that are representative of both employers and unions involved in the Sector must appoint the members of the SEO pension scheme trustee. The constitution of the Trustee Board should also include representatives of both employers and employees in the Sector.
7. In addition to providing pension benefits, an SEO pension scheme must also provide an additional Death in Service benefit with members covered for this benefit upon joining the scheme.
8. An existing pension scheme at the time the SEO comes into force may qualify as an SEO pension scheme provided it complies with the terms of the SEO or is adapted to so comply.
9. An SEO pension scheme must disclose and publicise information about the pension scheme's charges and who bears them. There must be full transparency of charges and this information should be disclosed in the scheme's Trustee Annual Report as well as provided to each member when joining. The total annual charges borne by members should be disclosed and must include all administration costs, Trustee costs, distribution costs, fund management costs, actuarial, accounting, legal and auditing fees and all other charges incurred by the SEO pension scheme.
10. Scheme Design
The terms and conditions applying under an SEO pension scheme and benefits to be provided must be at least as great as that described below.

10.1. Eligibility

An SEO pension scheme must at least provide for an employee of a participating employer in the Sector to be eligible for membership of the scheme provided they have attained age 20 but not yet attained age 65.

10.2. Relevant Pension Contributions

Employers and their employees working in the construction sector and related industries (the Sector) must contribute to an SEO pension scheme.

Contributions should be remitted by employers to an SEO pension scheme in accordance with all relevant pension and other legislative requirements.

10.3. Pension Benefits

- a) Members' pension benefits within an SEO pension scheme should be based on the full value of their individual pension funds and there should be no deductions from the contributions paid or when the funds are drawn down.
- b) The Trustees of the Scheme will invest each member's pension contributions and these along with the investment returns declared, net of charges, will determine the value of the member's pension fund.

10.4. Retirement

Normal Retirement Age shall be age 65. However, a member may be permitted to retire from age 60 (at the discretion of the scheme trustee). When a member retires, he or she should be able to choose from a range of options based on their entire fund value in line with applicable pension and tax legislation. One of the options which must be available is the provision of a pension for life for the member.

10.5. Death in Service Benefits

- a) Every employer to whom the SEO applies must participate in an SEO pension scheme that provides a death in service benefit for the deceased member's dependants. The death in service benefit should be in addition to the benefits provided for the dependants based on the full value of the member's pension fund.
- b) Provided the employee has completed a once-off initial qualifying contribution period, inclusion for death in service benefits shall be automatic on becoming a member of the SEO pension scheme, without medical underwriting or by reference to any previous medical conditions

of the member. In the event of the member moving to another participating employer within the Sector, the member should not be required to complete any further qualifying period in order to be covered for death in service benefits.

- c) Death in Service Contributions will form part of the overall contribution rate of an SEO pension scheme with a portion payable by both the member and employer in addition to the pension contributions.
- d) Contributions should be remitted by employers to an SEO pension scheme in accordance with all relevant pension and other legislative requirements.
- e) If a member had met the requirements for the full lump sum death in service benefit, but then leaves service and dies within four weeks of doing so without being reemployed in the Sector, the SEO pension scheme should provide a modified lump sum benefit in addition to the value of their pension account.
- f) Death in Service benefits should be payable regardless of cause or timing of death, so long as the member meets the qualification conditions for inclusion for Death in Service benefits as set out above.

Sick Pay Scheme

Every employer to whom the SEO applies must have in place a provision for Sick Pay benefits for each employee covered in the SEO.

Sick Pay Scheme Structure

The sick pay scheme to which the SEO applies ("SEO Sick Pay Scheme") should include the following features and benefits.

Sick Pay Scheme Structure

1. An SEO Sick Pay Scheme should be a funded arrangement with contributions held in Trust and independently administered and managed. An SEO Sick Pay Scheme should facilitate participation by multiple employers to reflect the flexible nature of employment within the Sector.
2. The main purpose of an SEO Sick Pay Scheme is the provision of benefits for every worker for periods of illness or injury while in the employment of employers to whom this SEO applies.
3. The Sick Pay Benefit should be paid to each employee without the need for underwriting or reference to previous medical conditions. Entitlement to Sick Pay Benefits should be unaffected and uninterrupted as employees transfer from one employer to another within the Sector.
4. The Sick Pay Benefits provided by an SEO Sick Pay Scheme should be in addition to any sickness, illness or invalidity benefits payable by the State through the social insurance system.

Conditions & Benefits

5. Eligibility

Inclusion for Sick Pay Benefits will be automatic on becoming a member of an SEO Sick Pay Scheme. No charges should be incurred by either employers or members for Sick Pay benefit provision, other than the relevant contributions required to provide the benefits.

6. Sick Pay Contributions

- a) An SEO Sick Pay Scheme should be a contributory sick pay scheme with contributions payable by both employers and employees.
- b) A member shall not lose accrued Sick Pay Benefit rights or entitlements as a result of changing employment within the Sector as accrued service will transfer to the next employer to whom the SEO applies.
- c) Employers who fail or neglect to make the authorised deduction shall be liable for the total contribution required to ensure that the worker's Sick Pay Benefits are maintained in full for the period of service with them.

7. Relevant Benefits

- a) An SEO Sick Pay Scheme shall provide for the payment of a standard Sick Pay Benefit for a specified duration and the benefit and duration should be disclosed to participating employers and members.
- b) An SEO Sick Pay Scheme may include a waiting period during which a member would not be entitled to any benefit from the scheme whilst initially absent due to illness or injury. This waiting period should not exceed the first five working days of disability.
- c) An SEO Sick Pay Scheme should facilitate continuity of Sick Pay Benefit from the Scheme from the first working day of disability where a claimant has returned to

work for a period of two working days or less. This is provided that the sick pay entitlement from the scheme has not been exhausted by reference to the duration limitations referenced earlier.

- d) An SEO Scheme should facilitate provision of a Supplementary Sick Pay Benefit if the claimant has no entitlement to Social Welfare benefit due to inadequate number of Social Welfare contributions.

- e) An SEO Sick Pay Scheme may set appropriate limitations on the maximum duration for which a Sick Pay Benefit may be payable. These must be clearly documented and disclosed to participating employers and members. The maximum duration under an SEO Sick Pay Scheme should not be any lower than a period of 10 weeks in any calendar year, whether for a single claim or in aggregate in a scheme year.

END

APPENDIX 2

HOURLY RATES OF PAY

ELECTRICIANS	31-3-2018 2.5% €	1-9-2018 2.5% €	1-9-2019 2.7% €
1st year out of time	22.31	22.87	23.49*
2nd year out of time	22.60	23.17	23.80
3rd year out of time	22.76	23.33	23.96*
4th year out of time	22.87	23.44	24.07
5th year out of time	23.00	23.58	24.22
6th year out of time	23.12	23.70	24.34*
APPRENTICES			
1st year (30%)	6.69	6.86	7.05*
2nd year (45%)	10.04	10.29	10.57*
3rd year (65%)	14.50	14.87	15.27*
4th year (80%)	17.85	18.30	18.79*