TECHNICAL Bulletin

Domestic consumer units not supplied by BS 88-3 fuses

Domestic consumer units have specific requirements and should be installed according to manufacturers guidance and the relevant British Standards

Key information

- Consumer units are a specific type of distribution board
- There are certain requirements within the manufacturing Standards for installation practices
- Deviations from these requirements should only be undertaken when all aspects have been considered

1. Domestic consumer units and appropriate supply protection

ECA would like to highlight to Members that the use of domestic consumer units not supplied by a BS 88-3 fuse-link has been on the rise.

Although not prohibited, it is worth clarifying the requirements around these products and highlighting to Members the potential risks that may arise should the incorrect supply arrangements of consumer units take place.

Domestic consumer units are intended to be operated by ordinary persons and should conform to BS EN 61439-3, which has a specific short-circuit test for a consumer unit in annex ZB using an upstream BS 88-3 (formerly BS 1361) fuse-link, resulting in a 16 kA conditional short-circuit rating.

Therefore, any installation where a consumer unit is installed without an upstream BS 88-3 fuse-link is unlikely to satisfy the requirements of BS EN 61439-3 and BS 7671 Regulation 536.4.201.

It is worth noting that a consumer unit is a specific type of distribution board and this does not mean it can be used in all circumstances. For installation supply arrangements differing from the BS 88-3 fused service cut-out arrangement, a single-phase type A distribution board to BS EN 61439-3 should be specified with an appropriate conditional short-circuit rating (Icc) for the PSCC at the distribution board incoming terminals.

If a designer or installer is using a consumer unit in a situation where there is no upstream BS 88-3 fuse, then they must ensure that the same level of short-circuit protection is available and that the conditional short-circuit rating of the product still meets the requirements of its BS EN 61439-3 certification and related declaration of conformity.

ECA, Rotherwick House, 3 Thomas More Street, St. Katharine's & Wapping, London E1W 1YZ
Tel: 020 7313 4800 **Email**: info@eca.co.uk **www.eca.co.uk**