



Live Performance Electrical Certificate Q & A

1. What is the LPEC?

The Live Performance Electrical Certificate (LPEC) is a certification for workers who perform temporary assembly and interconnection of plug-in wiring systems used in live performing arts, trade shows, conventions, touring shows and festivals.

2. Why was this certification created?

The development of this certification was driven by the industry in acknowledgement that, under the **BC Safety Standards Act: Electrical Safety Regulations**, individuals are not permitted to perform many of the tasks commonly associated with the set-up and operation of stage lighting and other audio visual systems, unless they hold a valid electrical certificate. There are a significant number of people employed in the live entertainment industry who are not aware of this regulation, and who have been performing this work without a recognized credential.

3. Aren't there already electrical certifications that apply to the entertainment industry?

There are currently two existing certificates - The Full Entertainment (FE) and the Limited Entertainment (LE) tickets, which apply to electrical work in the entertainment industry. These are specific to the needs & working conditions of the Motion Picture industry. Both of these tickets require a significant level of work experience in addition to passing a 5-week training course and a 2-3 hour exam.

4. How is the LPEC different from the FE or LE certificates?

The LPEC covers the work performed by lighting grips or stagehands, during the setup, run and strike of theatrical and other live events. It applies to the tasks that lighting crews commonly perform as they hang, focus, cable and maintain a lighting rig, as well as the set up of PA systems and audio visual installations used in live entertainment. The FE and LE tickets cover a much wider scope of work and are more applicable to workers at the department head level who perform power tie-ins and more complex electrical work, as well as film and television workers, who deal with high power lighting fixtures and generators. The holder of an FE or LE may also act as a field safety representative and sign for electrical permits, whereas the holder of an LPEC may not. The LE/FE is a higher level of certification.

5. What is the cost?

Free from February 1- July 31, 2011; after that \$50. It is a one-time only certification with no expiry date or requirement for renewal.

6. How do I prepare for the test?

The free study guide is available on line at www.actsafe.ca. In addition, workers must demonstrate they have 800 hours of practical experience, acquired:

1. in a training program with an established reputation in the Performing Arts industry and/or
2. while employed with a contractor or employer.

7. Who developed the exam?

Technicians working in the industry.

8. Who should obtain an LPEC certificate?

This certificate is designed for workers in the live event industry, who set up sound, lighting and AV systems in venues with an existing, fault protected, electrical system – as would be found in most convention centres, theatres and concert halls. The LPEC applies to the tasks that grips and stagehands are normally assigned as part of a lighting or audio/AV crew – namely, the interconnection of plug and cap assemblies and branch circuits. The LPEC certificate DOES NOT apply to the motion picture or television industry – those workers require an LE or FE.

9. When does this regulation come in to effect?

In fact, the requirement for persons setting up stage lighting to be certified has been in place for many years. However, the process to obtain an FE/LE certificate has proven to be a higher level of certification than is necessary for the live event industry due to the broad *scope* that those certificates cover. The LPEC will facilitate greater electrical regulatory compliance within the performing arts and establish a common industry approach to safety awareness. The LPEC has been developed with ease of access to certification as a primary consideration.

10. How do I obtain an LPEC certificate?

To obtain your certificate, you will write an online exam. The exam includes questions that test the candidate's understanding of both practical and academic subject matter. Therefore, applicants must have practical experience in the field and should be prepared to answer questions not necessarily covered in the study guide. To write the test, you must demonstrate and document 800 hours of practical experience. You can use the online study guide to prepare and you must receive a score of at least 70% to pass the LPEC exam.

11. What is 'verification'?

Because the examination is taken online at a time and location convenient for the candidate, we require an independent verification by an employer, union official, instructor or other responsible party to confirm that the candidate named in the application will be the person writing the examination. The application kit includes a form for the verifying individual to complete and sign.

12. When can I take the test?

The LPEC launches February 1, 2011. An application kit is available on our website. Upon approval of your application, you will be provided with a link to write the test.

13. What's the passing grade?

You must get 70% to pass.

14. How long do I have to write the test?

Applicants have 75 minutes to write the examination. Re-testing is permitted up to three times in six months, with a minimum 3-day delay between attempts 1 & 2, and a one week delay between the second and third attempts. This delay is intended to allow the candidate time to review the Study Guide.

15. How many questions are on the test?

There are 54 multiple-choice questions to answer.

16. Who ensures compliance of the LPEC?

The BC Safety Authority is the body responsible for overseeing the compliance.

17. Is there an electrical training program available?

We are not aware of a specific program that covers all the material required for certification. A number of colleges and universities offer "technical theatre" programs that teach an electrical component. Actsafe provides a study guide and the online certification.

18. What if you have the required hours of practical experience, but can't provide verification?

If you are having difficulty certifying your hours of practical experience, write us a letter explaining the circumstances and we'll review it on a case-by-case basis.

19. If I pass or fail after taking the test, will I be able to see the errors at the end of the exam?

Your results on particular questions are not available at the end of the exam because doing so would compromise the integrity of the exam.

20. What part of the electrical code is beneficial in helping pass the test?

The LPEC tests a candidate's understanding of the scope of the work performed, rather than knowledge of particular regulations or code. Please refer to the study guide and the scope (detailed in question 21 below).

21. What kind of work will I be certified to perform once I pass the LPEC?

An LPEC certifies a worker to perform the following:

- Set up temporary, plug-in electrical systems used in Performing Arts, trade shows, conventions, touring shows and festivals
- Utilize existing fault-protected electrical systems
- Interconnect plug and cap assemblies and branch circuits
- Set-up and interconnect XLR, 3, 4, and 5 pin cables, telex cable, coaxial, cat-5 and A/V cable
- Service equipment under manufacturer's documented recommendations and instructions
- Supervise a maximum of two uncertified workers on work within the LPEC scope

If you have further question or need more information, please visit our website at www.actsafe.ca, or feel free to give us a call at 604.733.4682/1.888.229.1455.