

PURPOSE

Ceiling spaces are deemed to be a **Restricted access area** - A restricted access area is a designated area which only authorised persons can enter for a specific purpose. **Authorised personnel** is a person who has been given permission by AMPC to enter a ceiling space to undertake specific works.

Ceiling spaces are complex high-risk work locations where there can be a potential risk of electrical shock from contact with damaged or exposed live wiring or equipment.

This guideline has been developed to provide authorised contractors access to a ceiling space as a restricted area for work activity which includes accessing, inspecting or working with in a ceiling space.

Electrical hazards within ceiling spaces may include:

- exposed live electrical conductor / wiring
- electrical connections where the condition of wiring has deteriorated, often associated with older buildings
- un terminated wiring left in the ceiling that could be still connected to the switchboard
- in-adequate RCD protection on circuits.

DEFINITIONS

- **Ceiling space** – is considered a restricted access area of any space between a suspended ceiling, constructed of any material, and the slab, roof or deck above.
- **Restricted access area** - A restricted access area is a designated area which authorised persons can enter for a period and for a specific purpose.
- **Authorised personnel** – person who has been given permission by AMPC to inspect and enter the ceiling space.
- **Types of works undertaken in ceiling spaces** – electrical, fire systems, mechanical, plumbers, pest control, fit out/de-fit contractors.

PROCEDURE WHEN VISUALLY INSPECTING A CEILING SPACE

1. Personnel inspecting the ceiling space must be a competent contractor and authorised by AMPC.
2. Where there is a known hazard, the ceiling space should be electrically isolated prior to accessing.
3. Prior to accessing a ceiling space, the ceiling grid / metal components are to be tested with the use of a voltage stick prior to handling or contacting components of the ceiling.
 - If the voltage stick indicates there are live components, cease works and notify AMPC Management immediately.
4. Once ceiling space access is deemed safe, adequate PPE such as non-conductive gloves and eye protection must be worn.
5. Only non-conducting ladders (such as fiberglass) must be used when accessing a ceiling space.
6. Before entering the ceiling space, **inspect** the work area to identify electrical hazards, for example; poor electrical wiring (such as any exposed wires).
 - Where hazards are identified, or where there is sufficient cause for concern cease works and report to AMPC Management immediately.

PROCEDURE WHEN UNDERTAKING ANY WORKS IN CEILING SPACES

Only authorised personnel are to undertake works in ceiling spaces under the following guidelines.

NO LIVE ELECTRICAL WORK TO BE UNDERTAKEN

1. Prior to commencement, all ceiling space works must have a site-specific Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) for routine works. Where works are non-routine, a risk assessment must be prepared in line with the following requirements.
 - a. Do not enter a ceiling space unless the **PROCEDURE WHEN VISUALLY INSPECTING A CEILING SPACE** has been completed and in consultation with AMPC Management.
2. The Electrical Contractor **MUST**:
 - a. Complete an electrical isolation permit
 - b. Isolate electrical services in the immediate ceiling space using LOCK OUT / TAG OUT procedures.
3. After the above inspection process has been undertaken works within the ceiling may commence.
4. Once work has been completed or deemed safe, the re-energisation process may commence.