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The holiday season is well and truly over and now it is time to put our noses to the grindstone. 2014 was an eventful year for the Australian electrical, comms and data industry. Two major cable recalls - Infinity/Oscent-branded cables and Ecables' power cables - cast a shadow over the electrical industry.

As most of you may be aware, non-compliant products not only raise serious safety concerns but they could also result in legal ramifications. They also give a bad name to the industry and negatively affect the overall economy. Contractors should always undertake reasonable steps to ensure the products they use and install are compliant and should report non-compliant products to respective regulatory bodies. It is not always easy to identify faulty products and contractors should consider having recall insurance in order to protect their business. The recent recalls of electrical products highlight the need to improve product compliance and certification systems in Australia. Australian electrical industry body NECA is already pushing for a register of compliant products and compliant manufacturers.

Separately, the ACCC has issued proceedings in the Federal Court against Olex Australia, Prysmian Power Cables and Systems, Rexel, wholesaling business L&H group, Electrical Wholesalers Association of Australia Limited (EWAA) and six individuals for alleged cartel and exclusionary conduct in the supply and acquisition of electrical cable. The matter has been filed in the Federal Court in Melbourne and is listed for a directions hearing on 6 February 2015. However, the ACCC has clarified that the matter is unrelated to the recall by 18 retailers and wholesalers of Infinity electrical cable due to safety concerns.

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