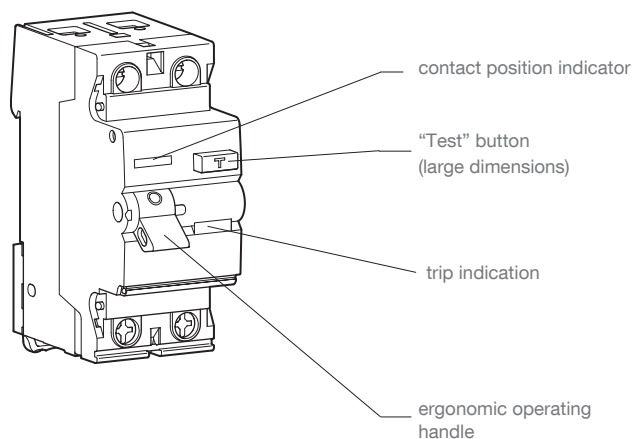


Product presentation



Contact positioning indicator

The mechanical indicator on the front of RCCB shows the physical position of the contacts.

- Red indication for closed contacts
- Green indication for open contacts

The green indication is the guarantee that the contacts are open and that the terminals are not live.

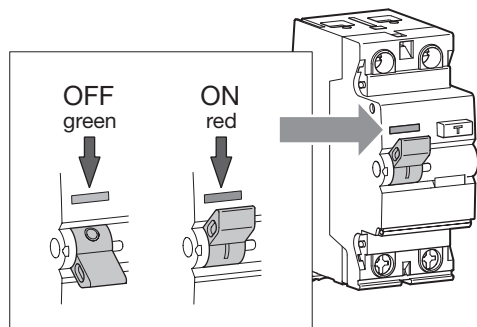
Trip indicator

The status of the RCCB can be visualised by the colour of the trip indicator in addition to the position of the operating lever.

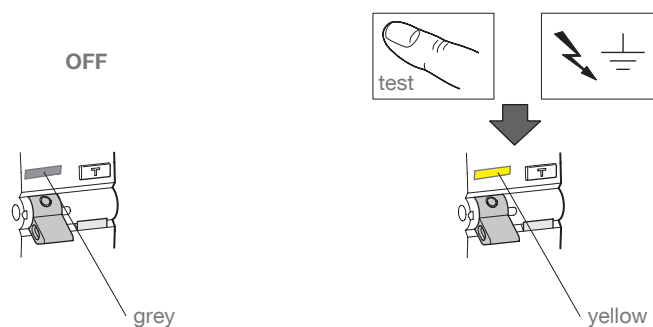
- Grey indication for normal conditions (even when operating lever is in ON/OFF position)
- Yellow indication for tripped condition, operating lever in OFF position.

Similar condition exists when TEST button is pushed or RCCB is remotely tripped via protection auxiliaries.

Positive contact indication



Earth leakage fault indication



Residual current devices

A residual current device (RCCB) is the generic term for a device which simultaneously performs the functions of detection of the residual current, comparison of this value with the rated residual operating value and opening the protected circuit when the residual current exceeds this value.

For fixed domestic installations and similar applications we have two types :

- Residual current operated circuit-breaker without integral over-current protection (RCCBs) which should comply with the requirements of IEC 61 008
- Residual current operated circuit-breaker with integral over-current protection (RCBOs) which should comply with the requirements of IEC 61 009

Both RCCBs and RCBOs are further divided into types depending on their operating function :

Type AC For which tripping is ensured for residual sinusoidal alternating currents, whether suddenly applied or slowly rising. Marked with the symbol:



Type A For which tripping is ensured for residual sinusoidal alternating currents and residual pulsating direct currents, whether suddenly applied or slowly rising. Marked with the symbol:



Type S For selectivity, with time-delay. Marked with the symbol:



RCCBs must be protected against short-circuits by means of circuit-breakers or fuses. RCBOs have their own in built short-circuit protection, up to it's rated value.

The drawing opposite shows how a toroid is located around the line and neutral conductors to measure the magnetic fields created by the current flowing in these conductors. The sum of the magnetic fields set up by these currents (which takes into consideration both the magnitude and phase relationship of the currents) is detected by the toroid.

In a normal healthy circuit the vector sum of the current values added together will be zero. Current flowing to earth, due to a line earth fault, will return via the earth conductor, and regardless of load conditions will register as a fault. This current flow will give rise to a residual current (I_{res}) which will be detected by the device.

It is most important that the line and neutral conductors are passed through the toroid. A common cause of nuisance operation is the failure to connect the neutral through the device.

RCCBs work just as well on three phase or three phase and neutral circuits, but when the neutral is distributed it must pass through the toroid.

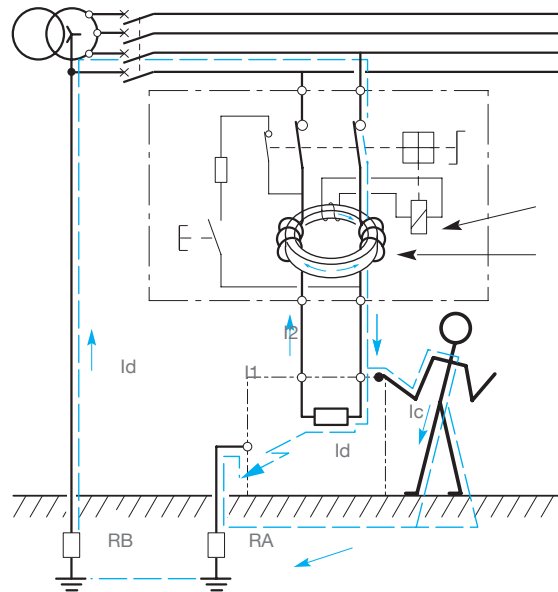
RCCBs are not suitable for use on DC systems and unearthed networks.

RCCBs – domestic installation

RCCBs can be installed in two ways:

1. whole house protection.
2. selective protection.

Principle



Current flowing through toroid in healthy circuit

$$I_{res} = I_1 - I_2 = 0$$

Current flowing through toroid in circuit with earth fault I_3

$$I_{res} = I_1 - I_2 + I_3 = I_3$$

Whole house protection is provided typically by a consumer unit where the RCCB device serves as the main switch. Although very popular this suffers from a disadvantage: all circuits are disconnected in the event of fault. Selective protection can be provided by associating the RCCB with identified high risk circuits by adopting one or more of the following :

- Split busbar consumer unit:
All circuits are fed via an overall isolator and selected circuits fed additionally via the RCCB. Typical circuits fed direct are lighting, freezer, storage heating; and circuits fed via the RCCB are socket outlets, garage circuits. This concept minimises inconvenience in the event of fault.

Individual RCBO

Each separate final circuit requiring protection by a RCD can be supplied through an RCBO. This method provides the best solution for minimising inconvenience.

Nuisance tripping

All Hager RCCBs incorporate a filtering device preventing the risk of nuisance tripping due to transient voltages (lightning, line disturbances on other equipment...) and transient currents (from high capacitive circuit).

Pulsating DC fault current sensitive

Increasingly, semi-conductors are also extensively used in computers, VDUs, printers, plotters... all of which may be fed from the mains electrical supply. The presence of semi-conductors may result in the normal sinusoidal AC waveform being modified. For example, the waveform may be rectified or, as in asymmetric phase control devices, the waveform may be chopped. The resulting waveforms are said to have a pulsating DC component.

In the event of an earth fault occurring in equipment containing semi-conductor devices, there is a probability that the earth fault current will contain a pulsating DC component.

Standard type AC may not respond to this type of earth fault current and the intended degree of protection will not be provided.

Use of RCCBs

RCCBs offer excellent protection against earth fault currents; the main areas of application being as follows:

- **Zs value too high to allow disconnection in the required time**

Where the overcurrent protection or a circuit breaker cannot provide disconnection within the specified time because the earth fault loop impedance is too high the addition of RCCB protection may well solve the problem without any other change in the system. Because of its high sensitivity to earth fault current and its rapid operating time, in most cases the RCCB will ensure disconnection within the specified time. This is achieved without any detriment to overcurrent discrimination because, unlike the situation in a fuse based system, the increased sensitivity is obtained without increasing sensitivity to overcurrent faults. Use of RCCBs in this way can be particularly useful for construction sites and bathrooms where disconnection times are more stringent than for standard installations. (Construction sites - 0.2s at 220-277V, bathrooms - 0.4s).

The limitation to this technique is the requirement that the rated residual operating current multiplied by Zs should not exceed 50V. This is to avoid the danger of exposed conductive parts reaching an unacceptably high voltage level.

Residual current protection can even be added to a completed distribution system where the value of Zs is excessive, either because of a design oversight or subsequent wiring modification.

- **Protection against shock by direct contact**

So far we have considered shock by indirect contact only. Direct contact is defined thus:

Direct contact - contact of persons or livestock with live parts which may result in electric shock. The consideration here is not the hazard of parts becoming live as a result of a fault but the possibility of touching circuit conductors which are intentionally live.

RCCBs, although affording good protection against the potentially lethal effects of electric shock, must not be used as the sole means of protection against shock by direct contact. The Electricity at Work Act recommends the use of RCCBs, "...danger may be reduced by the use of a residual current device but states that this should be "...considered as a second line of defence". The Wiring Regulations defines the other measures that should be taken i.e.

- insulation of live parts.
- barriers or enclosures.
- obstacles.
- placing live parts out of reach.

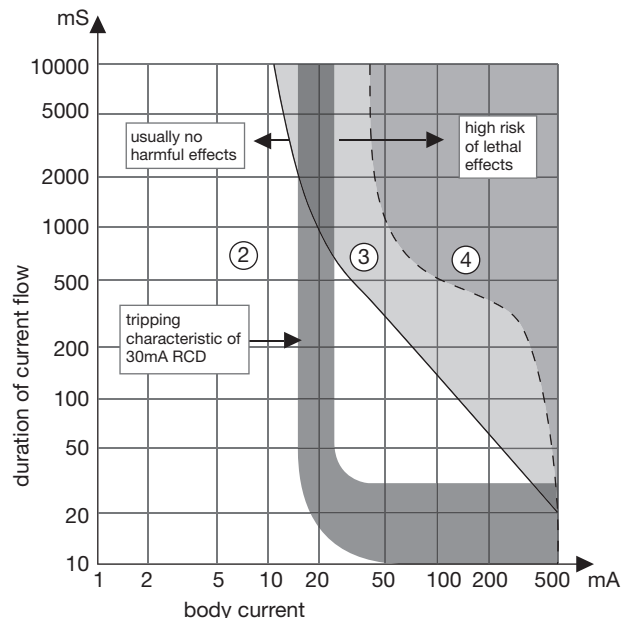
Additionally an RCCB used for this purpose should have:

- a sensitivity of 30mA
- an operating time not exceeding 40mS at a residual current of 150mA.

The specified sensitivity is based on research that has been carried out to estimate the effect various levels and duration of current can have on the human body. This experience is summarised in a graph shown in 'IEC 479-1: Effects of current passing through the human body'. A simplified version of this graph is shown opposite. It shows that very small currents can be tolerated for reasonably long periods and moderate currents for very short periods. It can be seen, for instance, that 100mA for 100mS or 20mA for 500mS will not normally cause any harmful effect. 200mA for 200mS or 50mA for 500mS which are in Zone 3, would be more dangerous; and shock levels in Zone 4 carry a risk of lethal consequences.

The tripping characteristic for a 30mA RCCB is also shown in the graph. It shows the level of current required to cause the RCCB to trip, for example; 50mA will cause a trip but not 10mA. Comparing its characteristic with the various zones on the graph it can be seen that the 30mA RCCB gives a very good measure of protection against the hazards associated with electric shock. Where a higher level of protection is required, for example in laboratories, 10mA devices are available.

IEC 60 479-1



Note :

Although RCCBs are extremely effective devices they must never be used as the only method of protection against electric shock. With or without RCCBs protection all electrical equipment should be kept in good condition and should never be worked on live.

- **Protection against shock outside the equipotential bonding zone**

Bonding conductors are used in an installation to maintain metallic parts, as near as possible, to the same potential as earth. Working with portable equipment outside this equipotential bonding zone, e.g. in the car park of a factory, introduces additional shock hazards. Socket outlets rated 32A or less 'which may be reasonably expected to supply portable equipment for use outdoors' should have at least one socket nominated for outdoor use. This socket should be equipped with 30 mA RCCB protection unless fed from an isolating transformer or similar device, or fed from a reduced voltage.

- **Protection in special situations**

The use of RCCBs is obligatory or recommended in the following situations:

- caravans: 30mA RCCB should be used.
- TT systems.
- swimming pools: 30mA RCCB for socket outlets in Zone B obligatory; recommended in Zone C.
- agricultural and horticultural: 30mA RCCB for socket outlets and for the purpose of protection against fire, $\text{RCCB} \leq 0.5\text{A}$ sensitivity.
- construction sites: 30mA RCCB recommended.

- **Portable equipment**

With the exception mentioned above, where a socket is specifically designated for work outside the equipotential bonding zone, the Wiring Regulations demand the use of RCCBs to protect the users of portable equipment. It is widely recognised that their use has made a significant contribution to safety in the workplace and the home.

- **Protection against fire hazards**

The provisions in the Wiring Regulations for protection against shock by indirect contact ensure rapid disconnection under earth fault assuming the fault has negligible impedance. Under such conditions the fault current, as we have seen, is sufficiently great to cause the overcurrent protection device to quickly disconnect the fault. However high impedance faults can arise where the fault current is sufficient to cause considerable local heat without being high enough to cause tripping of the overcurrent protective device. The heat generated at the point of the fault may initiate a fire long before the fault has deteriorated into a low impedance connection to earth.

The provision of residual current protection throughout a system or in vulnerable parts of a system will greatly reduce the hazard of fire caused by such faults.

- **PEN conductors**

The use of RCCBs with PEN conductors is prohibited. A PEN conductor is a single conductor combining the functions of neutral conductor and protective conductor. This being so, when the PEN conductor is taken through the torroid of an RCCB, earth faults will go undetected because the return path for the earth fault current is included in the residual sum.

- **Auxiliary contacts**

A range of auxiliaries, alarm and shunt contacts are available for Hager RCCBs.

- **Supply entry**

Top or bottom feed.