

## Safety Alert 190409-1C Update

22 July 2019

### Fatal electric shock during live low voltage pole changeover

A network operator lineworker received a fatal electric shock on 2 April 2019 while working from an insulated elevating work platform to relocate live open wire low voltage conductors onto a new pole.

Information provided at the scene, and subsequently updated by the network operator, indicates that:

- ▼ Live low voltage conductors were being transferred from an old pole to an adjacent new pole.
- ▼ Four electricity network operator workers were on site when the accident occurred:
  - ▼ One worker was working in an elevating work platform sleeving through live low voltage conductors that had been attached to a cross arm on the old pole.
  - ▼ A second worker was working on the adjacent new pole in a second elevating work platform. While installing a new permanent cross arm below a temporary cross arm on the new pole, this worker made contact between two exposed energised phases of the low voltage network, receiving an electric shock.
  - ▼ Two other workers were on the ground performing the role of safety observer for both workers who were aloft.

The network operator has informed IPART that:

- ▼ Requirements to install sufficient temporary insulation on exposed conductors and apparatus were not complied with.
- ▼ The safety observers did not have clear visibility of all works and worker movement being undertaken by the network worker working aloft.

A representative of the network operator informed IPART after the accident that the network operator has paused all live work by its staff and contractors and Accredited Service Providers, except urgent works where it is not feasible to isolate supply. The pause does not include testing or operating works, or circumstances where there is an immediate threat to life and limb. IPART is aware that the network operator recently amended its live work pause to permit live work by Level 2 Accredited Service Providers when additional mandatory controls are implemented.

The network operator has advised IPART that it is carrying out a review of each relevant live work task. The review is being carried out by a team that includes internal and external subject matter experts and a cross section of workers. Any applicable preventative controls identified during the review will be implemented before work is re-started.

This safety alert has been published by the delegate of the Tribunal under section 63V of the *Electricity Supply Act 1995* (NSW).

Images taken at site by an IPART inspector after the accident









