

ASP Safety Alert

Electrical Safety & Authorisations



Alert Number: SA06_18

Subject: Live service cable arc flash

4 April 2018

Key Messages

ASPs are reminded that the jointing of live low voltage underground cables is suspended on Ausgrid's network (ES4 CI 10.2.2.2). The live connection and disconnection of underground cables in columns and pillars is permitted when performed in accordance with the Electrical Safety Rules, and NS199 – Safe electrical work on low voltage underground assets.

Description of the incident

On the 15 January 2018, a Level 2 ASP was attempting to relocate a live paper lead service cable when he cut through the cable with a set of cable cutters. This resulted in a phase to earth arc flash, between the earthed lead sheath and active core, causing an uncontrolled release of electricity.

Extent of impact

No injury or electric shock was sustained. The incident was reported to Ausgrid immediately and the area was cordoned off to prevent unauthorised access until the cable could be repaired and the site made safe. The ASP was subsequently suspended from all works on or near the network.

Investigation findings

The investigation found the ASP:

- failed to understand the work permitted under Class 2B ASP Accreditation and Authorisation as per the *NSW Department of Planning & Environment – Accredited of Providers of Contestable Services (Scheme Rules)* and Ausgrid's *ES4 - Accredited Service Providers Authorisation* requirements;
- failed to maintain his safety systems to ensure they align with Ausgrid's policies, **in particular the ban on live low voltage jointing**, which includes the completion of live pot ends;
- failed to coordinate the relocation of the cables safely, and subsequently, his work practices resulted in an uncontrolled release of electricity.



ASP's are reminded that the jointing of low voltage cables must be carried out with the cables either fully isolated, or isolated from all sources of supply and shorted, as required by Clause 9.1.1 of the Electrical Safety Rules.

For further information please contact the Electrical Safety & Authorisations section at Level1ASP@ausgrid.com.au or ASPLLevel2@ausgrid.com.au.

Ausgrid

Electrical Safety & Authorisation Officers