

ASP Safety Alert

ASP Compliance and Practices



Alert Number: SA01_17

Subject: Working on or near Ausgrid's network and arc rated clothing

14 February 2017

Key Messages

Ensure all workers understand the requirement to wear full length arc rated clothing when working on or near Ausgrid's network

Recently Ausgrid has investigated two (2) incidents involving ASP workers that were observed not wearing full length arc rated clothing when working on or near Ausgrid's network.

This Safety Alert provides a summary of each incident and also explains Ausgrid's requirements for ASPs wearing full length arc rated clothing when working on or near Ausgrid's network.

Note: individuals need to be authorised to undertake ASP contestable work on or near Ausgrid's network.

Incident 1 - 14/12/2016 - ASP1 not wearing arc rated clothing

Two (2) ASP workers were witnessed standing and walking on Ausgrid's hardcover above live 11KV and low voltage cables when 'roding and roping' conduits they had previously installed. At the time of the incident they were not wearing full length arc rated clothing. The worksite and the individuals Authorisation were immediately suspended.

The investigation found the company management and the two (2) workers interpretation of the rules did not require them to wear the clothing when walking or standing on Ausgrid's hardcover. The company's safety documentation did not outline the requirements for wearing full length arc rated clothing.



Incident 2 - 14/12/2016 – ASP2 cable strike and not wearing arc rated clothing

Whilst excavating in the footpath to install conduits for a service main, which will supply a privately owned multifunction street light, an excavator's bucket hit an Ausgrid cable. The cable was a low voltage feeder and when the damage occurred the substation fuse operated causing a loss of supply for one (1) hour to local customers. There were no injuries.

The investigation found the ASP2 failed to positively identify the underground cables by hand digging or vacuum excavation. Other contributing factors included the individuals not reading the DBYD plans correctly and there was not adequate hard cover. ASPs should refer to Ausgrid's NS156 *Work near or on underground cables*.

It was also discovered two (2) ASP2 workers were working 'near' Ausgrid's network without wearing full length arc rated clothing.



What is the definition of 'working on or near Ausgrid's network'?

- working on Ausgrid's network is self explanatory i.e. when a person or their tools/equipment physically makes contact the network
- ESRs define working 'near' the network as when there is a reasonable possibility a part of your body, or any moveable object you might be wearing, touching, or carrying (which is not designed for safe use on live conductors of the same or higher voltage) may come closer to a live exposed conductor than the minimum safe working distance
- NS156 (clause 6.0) define working 'near' as listed below (note: there are other situations in NS156)
 - working within 0.3 metres either side of distribution cables
 - raising or lowering the surface level above cables and conduits
 - working within 2 metres of transmission and pilot cables

When is full length arc rated clothing required (also refer to the table below)?

- Ausgrid's Electrical Safety Rules (ESRs), clause 6.2.3 state, 'full length arc rated clothing' must be worn 'for all work on or near the Ausgrid network'
- when completing overhead work Ausgrid require the use of Minimum Safe Working Distances (section 6) for an 'ordinary person', i.e. three (3) metres, from overhead mains
- when completing underground work as outlined in NS156 clause 6.0 and as mentioned above

Task	Description	Full length arc rated clothing required?
Overhead line work	Completing work within 3m of overhead mains	Mandatory
	Work on an existing pole < 3m above ground clearance	Not mandatory
	Carrying out pole safety inspection (NS146)	Mandatory
	When climbing poles	Mandatory
	Working on a UGOH pole	Mandatory
Underground cable work	Digging around Ausgrid underground cables and being 'near' as per NS156 (e.g. 2m – transmission and 0.3m – distribution)	Mandatory
	Person on Ausgrid's hard cover/cables/conduits	Mandatory
	Excavating/digging above hard cover/cables/conduits	Mandatory
	Removing inspection cover on streetlight	Mandatory
	Removing a pillar lid	Mandatory
Substation work	Kiosk substation is landed, cables terminated, all types of sites (green/brown) and the work falls outside 3m and 'near' as defined by NS156	Not mandatory
	Chamber substation is equipped, cables terminated, all types of sites (green/brown) and the work falls outside 3m and 'near' as defined by NS156	Not mandatory
	Existing substations (all types)	Mandatory
Service work	ASP2 work e.g. installing conduits and service mains in a pillar	Mandatory
	Removing a pillar lid	Mandatory

What are ASPs required to do?

- communicate this Safety Alert, especially the incidents, to workers
- explain the requirements and situations where full length arc rated clothing is required
- review your company's safety systems to align with the requirements above

If you have any questions please contact an Ausgrid Project Officer.

Ausgrid Project Officers