

ASP Safety Alert ASP Compliance and Practices

Alert Number: SA05_22

14 March 2022

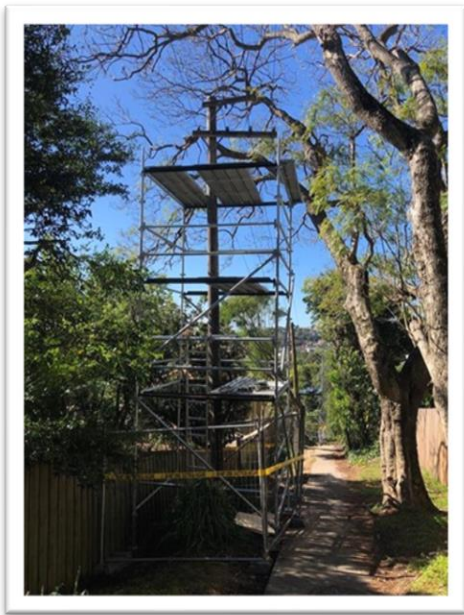
Subject: Scaffolding work in breach of Minimum Safe Working Distances

Key Messages

Be aware of the Minimum Safe Working Distances provided Electrical Safety Rules (Section 7.7) and ensure your works comply as required. Site specific hazards and associated risks must be noted on your HAC or WHS risk register and controls outlined in the appropriate SWMS adhered to with appropriate supervision.

Dear ASPs,

In October 2021 a scaffolding contractor was engaged to erect scaffolding around three condemned poles for an Ausgrid Project. On two occasions the scaffolder erected and worked on the scaffolding within the minimum safe working distances (MSWD's) of live overhead mains without appropriate controls or supervision. The erection of scaffolding surrounding the poles also provided the potential for a member of the public to climb the scaffolding and contact the live low voltage mains resulting in a possible life-threatening situation.



Causes and contributing factors:

Uncontrolled Risk:

- The contractor failed to adhere to and work outside the MSWD's
- The contractor did not follow the controls outlined in their SWMS
- The project specific hazards and the associated risks was not documented in the HAC or WHS risk register.

Contractor management:

- The scaffolder was not properly inducted to the site
- The scaffolder was not properly supervised during the works.

Key Insights and Learning Opportunities:

Pausing for safety and near miss/hazard reporting creates an opportunity to seek additional support from your Health and Safety Advisors to then proceed with works in a safe manner, preventing incidents and/or injuries to both staff and member of the public.

For additional information please see Safe Work NSW's [Work Near Overhead Power Lines: Code of Practice](#).

Ausgrid

Network Compliance & Authorisations