

# Safety Alert Electrical Safety & Compliance

Alert Number: SA18\_19

28 November 2019

## Subject: Electrical Hazards for Telecommunication assets after Storm Events

### Key Messages

**Due to recent storms, Ausgrid's network has suffered significant damage. Telecommunication workers should delay any non-critical works within Ausgrid's network area until the damage has been repaired.**

### Description of incident or hazard:

Due to recent storms, Ausgrid's network has suffered significant damage – in particular, damage has been suffered to poles, electrical equipment attached to Ausgrid's poles and overhead wires (**mains**). This damage may include dislodgement of live mains from their insulated fittings (including downed mains), or broken mains. Although damaged, the mains may still be energised, and it is possible for damaged mains to come into contact with other conductive components in the vicinity, including telecommunications equipment located on or near those mains. This means that telecommunication equipment could be live at any point, even at the remote end of conductive equipment such as overhead and underground cables, metallic pits and cabinets, if it has come into contact with the mains.

### Extent of impact:

Physical contact with, or even proximity to, live equipment can cause an electric shock, which may result in serious injury or death. There is often no warning that equipment is live.

### Immediate action taken (or to be taken) to eliminate or control the risk:

Employers in the telecommunication industry should delay non-critical works on telecommunications equipment until Ausgrid has completed necessary repairs to its network. Accessing areas with damaged mains, in particular fallen overhead wires, introduces additional electrical hazards for telecommunications workers and needs to be avoided.

When accessing equipment in areas where Ausgrid's network has been damaged, or other electrical hazards are suspected to exist, precautions should be taken to check that telecommunications equipment has not become inadvertently energised, and to check there are no other immediate electrical hazards present. In areas with known damage to Ausgrid's network, please check the status of Ausgrid's repairs in the area before commencing work.

### For further information contact:

Where further information is required, including updates on the status of Ausgrid's repairs to our network, telecommunication industry employers and workers should contact their relevant telecommunication network operations centre which will be receiving updates from Ausgrid's incident management team.

### Regards

**Electrical Safety & Compliance - Ausgrid**