

# ASP Safety Alert

**Subject: Controls for Work On or Near Exposed Live Low Voltage**

**23 May 2025**

## Background

Further to a tragic incident that occurred in Randwick on 22 May 2025 involving an Ausgrid employee who passed away after coming into contact with energised low voltage (**LV**) conductors, this Safety Alert has been prepared to remind workers of the controls to be followed when performing work on or near exposed live LV. In particular, ASP workers **must** act in accordance with the [Electrical Safety Rules \(ESRs\)](#) alongside your own safe systems of work.

## Controls for Work on or near Exposed Live LV

If you carry out work on or near live exposed LV mains and apparatus, you must follow all of the controls listed in section 9.5 of the ESRs, as summarised below:

### 1. Insulate earth potential

You **must** insulate yourself from earth potential and insulate any conductive material at earth potential that is within your reach. Insulation from earth potential must be achieved by:

- Working from a timber or fibreglass ladder, pole, or platform, or
- Working from an insulated EWP, or
- Working from an insulating mat that complies with Clause 6.7 of the ESRs, and,
- Applying temporary insulation compliant with Clause 6.7 of the ESRs to any conductive materials at earth potential that are within your reach.

### 2. Insulate all other conductors

You **must** apply temporary insulation to all other live exposed conductors that are within your reach, other than the conductor you are working on. Temporary insulating covers must comply with Clause 6.7 of the ESRs.

You **must** adequately secure any temporary insulating cover you apply to exposed conductors, to prevent it being inadvertently dislodged.

**Exception:** If you are working on overhead mains from a position below the lowest live overhead conductor (such that the only parts of your body capable of reaching the live exposed conductors are your insulating glove covered hands or forearms) the application of temporary insulation to the low voltage overhead conductors is not mandatory.

### 3. Insulating gloves

You **must** wear LV insulating gloves with protective leather outer gloves, and you may only make contact with the live exposed conductor with your insulating glove covered hands.

### 4. One potential at a time

You may only work on **one** potential at a time.

### 5. Body separation

You **must** keep uninsulated parts of your body separated from all conductors – both the exposed conductor being worked on, and the adjacent conductors covered with temporary insulation. (Temporary insulation compliant with Australian Standard AS 4202 is designed to protect against inadvertent contact only).

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## Role of a Safety Observer

If you are working on or near live exposed low voltage mains and apparatus, a safety observer **must** witness your work practices in accordance with the Electrical Safety Rules (ESR).

### A safety observer for live low voltage work must:

1. Ensure the appropriate safety controls are implemented and monitored for compliance as far as reasonably practicable and alert the live workers to any unsafe actions that may inadvertently occur.
2. Be in a position where they can adequately visually monitor the work. If the observer is unable to maintain clear vision of the live work, a secondary safety observer must be appointed to assist.
3. Maintain effective and immediate communication with the live worker(s) while the live work is in progress. Communication aids such as two-way radios may be required in some environments.
4. Be able to stop the work if necessary. The safety observer has the authority to temporarily stop the work at any time, to allow the work team to review their actions and controls.
5. Be prepared to perform or assist in a rescue. If observing workers carrying out live work from an EWP with remote base controls, the safety observer must have the EWP remote base controls readily accessible and within 2m of them, while live work is in progress.
6. Ensure so far as reasonably practicable, that unauthorised persons remain clear of the immediate worksite.

### The workers carrying out the live work must:

1. Maintain effective and immediate communication with the safety observer at all times. Communication aids such as two-way radios may be required in some environments.
2. Where intended critical steps in the live work process may not be reasonably foreseen by the safety observer, workers must inform the observer of such intended steps prior to carrying them out.
3. Listen to any advice, warning, or direction given by the safety observer and take appropriate action.

## ESR Live LV Controls

These critical controls detail the minimum requirements to prevent serious harm and injury. For Work on or Near Live Exposed LV Mains and Apparatus these include:

- Wear LV insulating Gloves
- Maintain separation between uninsulated parts of the body and all conductors
- Insulate all other potentials within reach
- Insulate worker from earth potential
- Work on one potential at a time
- Safety observer in place
- Rescue equipment in place (AED, Rescue Kits and PPE)

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## Permission to Pause

If you identify something that doesn't seem right when you are working on Ausgrid's network, we expect you to have the **courage to intervene**.

**Your permission to pause** provides you the time to get those around you to take a moment so you can ask if how you are doing work is really the best way, and if there is more you can do to ensure everyone is safe.

When you have used your courage to intervene you can expect that those you work with have **the character to accept**. Not only to accept the pause but reflect on the feedback and if needed accept that there are ways to improve how work is being done.

Ausgrid is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of our people and our industry Partners. We encourage you to take this time to have discussions and toolboxes with your teams, and to reiterate to your work groups your own safe systems of work. Below are some questions that may prompt discussions in your teams:

## Questions to prompt discussion

- Do you understand how to act in accordance the ESRs outlined above?
- Do you understand your permission to pause?
- What should you do if you are not able to maintain these controls during work on or near exposed live LV?
- Is there anything outlined in this Safety Alert that you do not understand?
- Do you have any questions?

## Supporting materials

Further information refer to the [Electrical Safety Rules 2024](#)

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