

WORK NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES

CODE OF PRACTICE 2006

Disclaimer

This publication may contain occupational health and safety and workers compensation information. It may include some of your obligations under the various legislations that WorkCover NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate legislation.

Information on the latest laws can be checked by visiting the NSW legislation website (www.legislation.nsw.gov.au) or by contacting the free hotline service on 02 9321 3333.

This publication does not represent a comprehensive statement of the law as it applies to particular problems or to individuals or as a substitute for legal advice. You should seek independent legal advice if you need assistance on the application of the law to your situation.

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WHAT IS AN INDUSTRY CODE OF PRACTICE?

An approved industry code of practice is a practical guide to employers and others who have duties under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* (OHS Act) and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001* (OHS Regulation) with respect to occupational health, safety and welfare.

An industry code of practice is approved by the Minister administering the OHS Act. It comes into force on the day specified in the code or, if no day is specified, on the day it is published in the NSW Government Gazette. An approved industry code of practice may be amended from time to time (or it may be revoked) by publication in the Gazette.

An approved industry code of practice should be observed unless an alternative course of action that achieves the same or a better level of health, safety and welfare at work is being followed.

An approved industry code of practice is intended to be used in conjunction with the requirements of the OHS Act and the OHS Regulation but does not have the same legal force. An approved industry code of practice is advisory rather than mandatory. However, in legal proceedings under the OHS Act or OHS Regulation, failure to observe a relevant approved industry code of practice is admissible in evidence to establish an offence under the OHS Act or OHS Regulation.

A WorkCover Authority inspector can draw attention to an approved industry code of practice in an improvement or prohibition notice as a way of indicating the measures that could be taken to remedy an alleged contravention or non-compliance with the OHS Act or OHS Regulation. Failure to comply with an improvement or prohibition notice without reasonable excuse is an offence.

In summary an approved **INDUSTRY CODE OF PRACTICE**:

- ✓ gives practical guidance on how health, safety and welfare at work can be achieved;
- ✓ should be observed unless an alternative course of action that achieves the same or a better level of health, safety and welfare in the workplace is being followed;
- ✓ can be used in support of the preventive enforcement provisions of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*;
- ✓ can be used to support prosecutions for failing to comply with or contravening the OHS Act or OHS Regulation.

PREFACE

The aim of this code of practice is to protect the health and safety of persons from the risks arising when they are working near overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus. It provides practical advice on implementing the requirements of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001*.

This code of practice provides practical guidance on the risk control measures, competency requirements and approach distances for workers working near overhead power lines. It applies to people with varying levels of qualification, training or knowledge.

This code of practice will assist employers, self-employed persons, employees, contractors and other parties involved in managing electrical risks associated with work near overhead power lines.

Use this code of practice to assess the effectiveness of your present arrangements when working near overhead power lines, and to check that all risks have been identified, assessed and eliminated or controlled.

This code of practice has been developed in consultation with members of the NSW electricity supply industry, including relevant unions and employer bodies. It is based on the earlier Electricity Association of N.S.W publication, *Interim Guide for Operating Cranes & Plant in Proximity to Overhead Power Lines*, and the Australian Standard AS 2550.5 – 2002 *Cranes, hoists and winches – Safe use Part 5: Mobile and Vehicle Loading Cranes*, which was gazetted as an approved industry code of practice on 21 September 2001 in the *Code of Practice: Technical Guidance*. In the event of any inconsistencies between the Standard and this code, the code shall prevail.

WHAT IS WORK NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES?

There are legislative obligations on employers, self-employed persons and controllers of premises in regard to undertaking work in close proximity, or at an unsafe distance, to overhead power lines. The term 'near' is utilised as a reference point for persons planning and undertaking this work.

Work 'near' overhead power lines means a situation where there is a reasonable possibility of a person, either directly or through any conducting medium, coming closer than the approach distances specified in this code. For the purposes of this code the term 'near' can be interchanged with other legislative or commonly used industry terms ie 'close proximity', 'unsafe distance' or 'in the vicinity of'.

PERSONNEL WORKING NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES

This code of practice is based on the assumption that without appropriate technical knowledge and experience of electricity distribution networks and associated electrical apparatus, untrained personnel working or operating cranes or plant near overhead power lines will not be able to identify the operating voltage concerned, and will therefore not be able to recognise and avoid the inherent dangers of live overhead power lines. These personnel are termed **ordinary persons**.

The approach distances specified in this code of practice take account of differing levels of technical knowledge, and are substantially greater for ordinary persons than for personnel who have been trained and assessed as having the necessary technical knowledge. These personnel are termed **accredited persons**.

HOW CAN WORKING NEAR LIVE OVERHEAD POWER LINES BE DANGEROUS?

Overhead power line contact is one of the largest single causes of fatalities associated with mobile plant and equipment.

Contact with live overhead power lines is a serious risk because any voltage that causes sufficient current to pass through the heart is potentially injurious or even fatal.

Contact with live electricity can also cause serious burns arising from the discharge of electrical energy. Other risks include fires and explosions that may immobilise the equipment involved.

You don't have to have a direct contact with a high voltage overhead power line to receive a fatal electric shock. ***Simply being too close can kill.***

WHAT DO THE SYMBOLS IN THE CODE OF PRACTICE MEAN?

To help you work out what you require, a number of symbols are used to highlight things you need to take into account and tools to help you do the job.



Consult and communicate with employers



Legal obligations that must be followed



The process of finding things that cause harm, working out how big a problem they are and fixing them.



Assess the risks in your workplace



Tools that can help you work out your plan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In developing this code of practice WorkCover NSW has drawn on information contained in a number of codes of practice and industry guidelines issued by other State regulators or organisations. WorkCover NSW acknowledges the following publications, which have been incorporated in parts of this code.

- *Code of practice – Working near exposed live parts* – Queensland, Department of Industrial Relations, and
- *Framework for undertaking work near overhead and underground assets* – WorkSafe, Victoria, and
- *NENS 04-2003 National guidelines for safe approach distances to electrical apparatus* – Energy Networks Association.

CHAPTER 1 – ESTABLISHMENT

1.1 Title

This is the Code of Practice – Work near Overhead Power Lines.

1.2 Purpose

This code of practice provides practical guidance in order to protect the health and safety of persons working near overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus. It provides guidance on the risk control measures, competency requirements and approach distances to live electrical conductors, including no go zones for cranes and plant (and their loads), as well as for vehicles, individuals and hand-held tools. It applies to persons with varying levels of qualification, training or knowledge.

This code of practice should be used instead of the *Interim Guide for Operating Cranes and Plant in Proximity to Overhead Power Lines – ISSC 26* issued by the Electricity Association of NSW in September 2001.

1.3 Scope

This code of practice applies to work, which is carried out near overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus excluding:

- work on electricity network assets where the work is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the *Electricity Supply (Safety and Network Management) Regulation 2002* and the work is either:
 - by or for an electricity network operator, or
 - by an accredited service provider, or
 - by a telecommunications network operator.
- mobile plant or vehicles operating on a public road where the design envelope is not greater than the transit envelope and is in any case not greater than 4.6 metres in height (eg a side loading waste collection vehicle collecting waste bins from the side of a public road under overhead power lines);
- when the crane or item of plant is correctly stowed for travelling on a public road;
- work on a mine site;
- work involving low flying aircraft (eg crop dusting, pesticide or herbicide spraying, etc);
- work carried out by emergency services personnel, including state emergency service, fire, police, volunteer rescue association and ambulance personnel during a declared emergency or other local emergency incident. In this situation the agency should advise the network operator of the circumstances of the emergency work and ensure a safe system of work is applied by those emergency services personnel undertaking the work.

This Chapter 1 is introductory, describes the purpose of this code, and provides definitions. Chapter 2 explains the regulatory principles in the occupational health and safety legislation, which this code is intended to complement. Chapter 3 describes a framework for work near overhead power lines by outlining general risk management principles, competency requirements and approach distances for the work. More detailed risk management requirements for specific workplace activity are set out in Chapters 4 to 9 inclusive.

1.4 Authority

This is an industry code of practice approved by the Minister for Commerce, under section 43 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*, on the recommendation of the WorkCover Authority of New South Wales ('WorkCover NSW').

1.5 Commencement

This code takes effect on [Gazettal /date]

1.6 Interpretation

1.6.1 Recommended practices

Words such as 'should' indicate recommended courses of action. 'May' or 'consider' indicate a possible course of action the duty holder should consider. However, you may choose an alternative method of achieving a safe system of work. For a further explanation, see 'What is an industry code of practice'.

1.6.2 Legal obligations

Words such as 'must', 'requires' and 'mandatory' indicate obligations, which must be complied with. Failure to comply with the code can be used as evidence in proceedings for an offence against the OHS Act or OHS Regulation (where the code is relevant to any matter, which it is necessary for the prosecution to prove to establish the commission of the offence).

1.7 Applicable legislation



Consult the OHS Act and the OHS Regulation for the specific legal requirements regarding occupational, health and safety responsibilities for work near overhead power lines.

Specific responsibilities:

Clause 41(4) of the OHS Regulation requires a controller of premises to ensure that persons working in, or undertaking maintenance on, the premises (apart from those undertaking electrical work) are prevented from coming within an unsafe distance from any overhead power lines or live electrical installations unless a risk assessment determines otherwise.

Clause 64(2)(e) of the OHS Regulation requires employers to ensure that persons at work, their plant, tools or other equipment and any materials used in or arising from the work do not come into close proximity with overhead electrical power lines (except if the work is done in accordance with a written risk assessment and safe system of work and the requirements of the relevant electricity supply authority).

Other significant legislation:

The *Electricity Supply (Safety and Network Management) Regulation 2002*, which is administered by the Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability, requires that a person must not carry out work on or near a network operator's transmission or distribution system and a network operator must not allow a person to carry out work on or near its transmission or distribution system unless the person is qualified under the relevant requirements of the network operator's network management plan, to carry out the work; and the work is carried out in accordance with the relevant requirements of that plan.

1.8 Definitions

The following definitions are used for the purposes of this code of practice:

access authority	means a written authorisation, issued by a network operator, which allows persons to work within the no-go zone.
accredited person	means a person who has successfully completed a recognised training course relating to work near overhead power lines that has been conducted by a registered training organisation.
accredited service provider	means a person who has been accredited by the Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability to undertake work on the electricity network.
approach distance	means the minimum separation in air from an exposed overhead conductor that must be maintained by a person, or any object held by or in contact with that person. Note: Refer to Chapter 3 for relevant approach distances.
approved	<p>means approved in writing. This can be achieved by any, or a combination, of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• providing a paper document;• sending a facsimile;• other equivalent means (eg e-mail).
authorised person	means a person with technical knowledge or sufficient experience who has been approved by the network operator.
authorised representative	of an industrial organisation of employees means an officer of that organisation who is authorised under the <i>Industrial Relations Act 1996</i> .
competent person	for any task means a person who has acquired through training, qualification, experience, or a combination of them, the knowledge and skills to carry out the task.
conductor	means a wire, cable or form of metal designed for carrying electric current.
construction work	<p>means any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) excavation, including the excavation or filling of trenches, ditches, shafts, wells, tunnels and pier holes, and the use of caissons and cofferdams,(b) building, including the construction (including the manufacturing of prefabricated elements of a building at the place of work concerned), alteration, renovation, repair, maintenance and demolition of all types of buildings,(c) civil engineering, including the construction, structural alteration, repair, maintenance and demolition of, for example, airports, docks, harbours, inland waterways, dams, river and avalanche and sea defence works, roads and highways, railways, bridges and tunnels, viaducts, and works related to the provision of services such as communications, drainage, sewerage, water and energy supplies.
control measures	measures taken to minimise a risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

crane	means an appliance intended for raising or lowering a load and moving it horizontally, and includes the supporting structure of the crane and its foundations, but does not include industrial lift trucks, earth moving machinery, amusement devices, tractors, industrial robots, conveyors, building maintenance equipment, suspended scaffolds or lifts.
de-energised	means not connected to any source of electrical supply but not necessarily isolated.
earthed	means directly electrically connected to the general mass of earth so as to ensure and maintain the effective dissipation of electrical energy.
earth moving machinery	means an operator controlled item of plant used to excavate, load or transport, compact or spread earth, overburden, rubble, spoil, aggregate or similar material, but does not include a tractor or industrial lift truck.
electrical apparatus	means any electrical equipment, including overhead power lines and cables, the conductors of which are live or can be made live.
electricity network	means transmission and distribution systems consisting of electrical apparatus which are used to convey or control the conveyance of electricity between generators' points of connection and customers' points of connection. Note: Overhead power lines on private property come under the control of the controller of the premises.
elevating work platform	means a telescoping device, scissor device or articulating device, or any combination of those devices, used to move personnel, equipment or materials to and from work locations above the support surface.
envelope	means the space encapsulating a plant item, including attachments such as rotating / flashing lights or radio aerials and is categorised as: Design: the space encapsulating all possible movements of the plant and any load attached under maximum reach. Transit: the area encompassing the normal height and width of a vehicle or plant when traveling to or from a worksite.
employee	means an individual who works under a contract of employment or apprenticeship.
employer	means a person who employs persons under contracts of employment or apprenticeship. Note: In some chapters of the OHS Regulation, the term 'employer' includes a self-employed person in relation to duties to other persons. See the definition of 'employer' in clause 3 of the OHS Regulation.
energised	means connected to a source of electrical supply.
exposed conductor	an electrical conductor that is hazardous because it has not been protected by a barrier of rigid material or by insulation that is adequate for the voltage concerned, under a relevant Australian Standard specification.
hazard	means anything (including work practices and procedures) that has the potential to harm the health or safety of a person.

high-risk construction work	means any of the following construction work, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involving structural alterations that require temporary support • at a height above 3 metres • involving excavation to a depth greater than 1.5 metres • demolition work for which a licence is not required • in tunnels • involving the use of explosives • near traffic or mobile plant • in or around gas or electrical installations • over or adjacent to water where there is a risk of drowning.
high voltage (HV)	means a nominal voltage exceeding 1,000 V a.c. or exceeding 1,500 V d.c.
hoarding	for the purposes of this code is containment sheeting positioned on the external face of a scaffold that serves as a physical barrier between a worker and live overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus.
insulated	means separated from adjoining conducting material by a non-conducting substance which provides resistance to the passage of current, or to disruptive discharges through or over the surface of the substance at the operating voltage, and to mitigate the danger of shock or injurious leakage of current.
Interim Guide	means the <i>Interim Guide for Operating Cranes and Plant in Proximity to Overhead Power Lines</i> – ISSC 26 issued by the Electricity Association of NSW.
isolated	means disconnected from all possible sources of electricity supply by means which will prevent unintentional energisation of the apparatus and which is assessed as a suitable step in the process of making safe for access purposes.
live	means connected to any source of electrical supply or subject to hazardous induced or capacitive voltages.
low voltage (LV)	means a nominal voltage exceeding 50 V a.c. or 120 V d.c. but not exceeding 1000 V a.c. or 1500 V d.c.
LV – ABC (Aerial Bundled Cable)	means an insulated cable system used for low voltage overhead distribution of electricity that is manufactured in accordance with the Australian Standard, AS/NZS 3560.
mobile crane	means a crane capable of travelling over a supporting surface without the need for fixed runways (including railway tracks) and relying only on gravity for stability, that is, with no vertical restraining connection between itself and the supporting surface and no horizontal restraining connection (other than frictional forces at supporting-surface level) that may act as an aid to stability.

mobile plant	<p>includes plant that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) moves either under its own power, or is pulled or pushed by other mobile plant (b) moves on or around the work site, enters or leaves the site, or moves past the site (c) includes road vehicles operating at a worksite <p>Note: This definition has been adopted for the purposes of this code of practice. This includes items such as earthmoving machinery, concrete boom pumps and tipper trucks operating at a worksite.</p>
near	means a situation where there is a reasonable possibility of a person, either directly or through any conducting medium, coming closer than the relevant approach distances specified in this code.
network operator	means the owner, controller or operator of an electricity network also known as an electricity supply authority.
no go zone	<p>means the area around overhead power lines into which no part of a person or material or cranes or vehicles or items of mobile plant may encroach without the approval of the network operator.</p> <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • person includes hand tools, equipment or any other material held by a person. • plant includes the load, controlling ropes and any other accessories.
occupier	<p>of premises includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a person who, for the time being, has (or appears to have) the charge, management or control of the premises, or (b) a person who, for the time being, is in charge (or appears to be in charge) of any operation being conducted on the premises.
operating voltage	means the a.c. voltage (phase to phase RMS) or d.c. voltage by which a system of supply is designated.
ordinary person	means a person without sufficient training or experience to enable them to avoid the dangers which overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus may create.
overhead power line	means any bare or covered aerial conductors and other associated electrical parts that make up an aerial line for the distribution and transmission of electrical energy.
personal protective equipment (PPE)	<p>items that workers can use to protect themselves against hazards. PPE includes insulating gloves, mats or sheeting, glasses and face protection.</p> <p>Note: A number of items of PPE are made and tested to Australian Standards.</p> <p>PPE that is not designated as meeting a recognised Standard may be unreliable in service, as its performance is unknown.</p>

place of work	means premises where persons work.
plant	includes any machinery, equipment or appliance. Note: For the purposes of this code the definition includes a broad range of machinery and equipment, but not limited to, cranes, mobile plant, scaffolding, load shifting equipment, industrial lift trucks, earth moving machinery, amusement devices, tractors, rural machinery, vehicles, conveyors, building maintenance equipment, suspended scaffolds or lifts, implements or tools and any component or fitting of those things.
premises	includes any place, and particularly includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any land, building or part of a building • any vehicle, vessel or aircraft, or • any installation on land, on the bed of any waters or floating on any waters, or • any tent or movable structure.
OHS Act	means the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000</i> .
OHS Regulation	means the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001</i> .
safety observer	means an accredited person specifically assigned the duty of observing and warning against unsafe approach to overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus, or other unsafe conditions.
safe work method statement (SWMS)	means a statement that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describes how the work is to be carried out • identifies the work activities assessed as having safety risks • identifies the safety risks; and • describes the control measures that will be applied to the work activities, and includes a description of the equipment used in the work, the standards or codes to be complied with, the qualifications of the personnel doing the work and the training required to do the work.
self-employed person	means a person who works for gain or reward otherwise than under a contract of employment or apprenticeship, whether or not they employ others.
tiger tails	means pipe type cable covers, used as a warning to visually indicate the position of overhead power lines. Note: A tiger tail is also known as a torapoli pipe.
vehicle	means a truck (non tipping), car or utility, or other general purpose conveyance used for the carriage of persons, materials or goods.
voltage	means a potential difference between conductors or between conductors and earth.
work	means work as an employee or as a self-employed person.

CHAPTER 2 – CONSULTATION AND RISK MANAGEMENT



The OHS Act and the OHS Regulation require employers to address workplace health and safety through a process of risk management and consultation.

To effectively implement this code, employers need to be aware of these requirements and have procedures in place to apply them. Employers are advised to consult the OHS Act and the OHS Regulation as well as the *Code of Practice: Occupational Health and Safety Consultation* and the *Code of Practice: Risk Assessment* for details of these requirements and how they can be met. The following information is designed to provide an overview of legislative requirements.

The OHS Regulation requires employers (and self-employed persons) to identify hazards and to ensure that any risk of injury from electricity at a place of work is eliminated, or if elimination is not reasonably practicable, the risk is controlled.

Other legislative requirements particularly relevant to this code are clause 64 of the OHS Regulation, which requires that employers must ensure that persons at work, their plant, tools or other equipment and any materials used in or arising from the work do not come into close proximity with overhead power lines.

Controllers of premises also have obligations under section 10 of the OHS Act and clause 41 of the OHS Regulation for work that is carried out near overhead power lines.

This code of practice provides guidance on ensuring these requirements are met and should be implemented within a risk management framework. Risk management is a way of organising your efforts to determine safe systems of work. Following this procedure will help you identify the safety issues for work that is to be carried out near overhead power lines.

The following information is designed to provide an overview of:

- consultation
- risk management
- information, instruction, training and supervision

2.1 Consultation at the workplace



Employers must consult with employees when taking steps to assess and control workplace risks.

In order to consult with employees, employers are required to set up consultation arrangements and develop consultation procedures.

2.1.1 Consultation arrangements

The OHS Act provides three options for consultation arrangements under sections 16 and 17:

Arrangement	Number of employees	Requirement
OHS committee	20 or more employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• requested by a majority of employees, or• directed by WorkCover
OHS representative	any size	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• at least one employee requests an election, or• directed by WorkCover
Other agreed arrangements	any size	agreed to by both the employer and employees (in a small workplace it may be a regular safety meeting with employees)

Before using this code, an employer should ensure that consultation arrangements are in place. An employer may initiate the establishment of an OHS Committee or the election of an OHS Representative if the employees have not made such a request. When the consultation arrangements have been decided, clause 27 of the OHS Regulation requires employers to record them and advise all existing and new employees.

2.1.2 Consultation procedures

After setting up the consultation arrangements, employers need to consider when and how these consultation arrangements need to be applied.

2.1.3 When should consultation be undertaken?

Under section 13 of the OHS Act, employers have a general duty to consult employees when decisions are being considered that may affect their health, safety and welfare at work. Therefore, employers are required to consult with their OHS Committee, OHS representative or other agreed arrangement when such decisions are being considered. Decisions, which could affect health, safety and welfare for work near overhead power lines include:

- eliminating or controlling risks to health and safety from work
- assessing, reviewing and monitoring risks to health and safety from work
- planning, designing or changing work tasks or jobs
- purchasing new plant and equipment or substances
- using contractors at the workplace
- investigating incidents or accidents
- developing emergency procedures
- determining or reviewing consultation arrangements

Note: Any procedures that are developed to encompass these activities should incorporate consultation.

It may not be practical or reasonable to involve the OHS committee or the OHS representative in every decision. However, the employers or committee or representatives should agree on what process is needed to ensure that affected employees are consulted.

2.1.4 How should consultation be undertaken?

When engaged in consultation, section 14 of the OHS Act requires employers to:

- Share all relevant information with employees – for example, if an employer is going to change a work task, employees need to be told of any risk to health and safety that may arise and what will be done to eliminate or control these risks.
- Give employees reasonable time to express their views – employees need adequate time to assess the information given to them, obtain relevant safety information and consult with fellow employees to enable them to form their views.
- Value the views of employees and take into account when the decision is made to resolve the matter – in many cases, agreement will be reached on how the safety issues are to be addressed. When agreement cannot be reached, the employer should explain how the employee's concerns have been addressed.

2.2 Risk management at the workplace



Employers and self-employed persons must identify any foreseeable hazards, assess their risks and take action to eliminate or control them. Employees must be consulted as part of this process.

A hazard identification and risk assessment process must be carried out at the planning and preparation stage by the employer/contractor, in consultation with the persons doing the work near overhead power lines to determine what risks may arise when the work is being carried out. Safe systems of work must then be put in place to eliminate or control these risks. **Note:** For some work activities carried out near overhead power lines the safe system of work must also be documented in a safe work method statement. Refer to section 2.4.1.

The process of risk assessment and control is made up of the following steps:

- identify the hazards
- assess the risk(s) to the health and safety of persons arising from the hazards
- use appropriate control measures to eliminate or control the risk(s)
- monitor and review the control measures to ensure on-going safety.

2.2.1 Identify hazards

To ensure a safe and healthy workplace, employers must take reasonable care to identify all the foreseeable health and safety hazards, which could harm their employees or other persons in the workplace. Hazards may arise from the work process, the equipment and materials in use, the work environment, or other people involved.

Live overhead power lines are a potential hazard posing substantial risk of death or serious injury. In addition to electrical shock and electrocution, contact with overhead power lines, can result in:

- the electrifying of other objects such materials, tools and items of plant, with the potential for electric shock or electrocution;
- a rain of molten metal caused by contact between an energised conductor and another conducting medium;
- fire;

- explosion; or
- swift, unpredictable power line whiplash.

2.2.2 Assess risks

Once hazards have been identified, the risk they pose to health and safety needs to be assessed. Some hazards pose a greater risk than others do, and the frequency and duration of exposure can also affect the risk. Risk assessment involves considering the likelihood and severity of injury or illness being caused by exposure to the risk. Therefore the factors that need to be considered in a risk assessment should include the:

- harm that can be caused by exposure to the hazard
- number of people and the duration and frequency of exposure to the hazard
- capability, skill and experience of people exposed to the hazard.

The risk assessment process provides information on the factors, which contribute to the risk. This information will assist in determining what needs to be done to eliminate or control the hazard.

2.2.3 Eliminate or control the risk

The OHS Regulation prescribes the following hierarchy of controls that must be used to eliminate or control a risk to health and safety in the workplace. Refer to the following chapters of this code of practice to see how this must be applied to work near overhead power lines. In particular, consider the following:

Level 1: Eliminate the hazard by:

- discontinuing the work activity or arranging for the de-energising of the overhead power lines during the work or re-routing the overhead power lines away from the work activity.

Level 2: Minimise the risk by:

- substituting the system of work or plant (with something safer that does not come near the overhead power lines). This could mean using an alternate crane or mobile plant, which cannot encroach the approach distances specified in this code.
- separating the hazard. This could mean erecting a physical barrier to prevent a person or anything held by a person, or attached to the person, coming near the overhead power lines.
- introducing engineering means. This could mean substituting with a less hazardous process or modifying an item of plant or equipment to ensure it does not come near the overhead power lines.
- adopting administrative controls, by example, signage, warning barriers marking the worksite, safe work procedures such as maintaining a safe distance from overhead power lines and using a safety observer to warn people before they encroach the approach distances specified in this code.
- using personal protective equipment (PPE). (eg insulating gloves, safety helmets, eye protection).

The control measures at Level 1 give the best results and should be adopted where possible. The Level 2 measures apply in descending order of effectiveness and require more frequent reviews of the hazards and systems of work. In some situations a combination of control measures may be used such as engineering means and administrative controls.

2.2.4 Review risk assessment and control measures

Control measures should be reviewed on a regular basis. The frequency of their review should be determined by considering the significance of the risks associated with the hazard. However, a review should be undertaken in the following circumstances:

- new information is made available about the risks associated with the hazard
- an accident or incident occurs
- significant changes are proposed to the workplace or work system.

2.3 Information, instruction, training, and supervision



The OHS Act requires employers to provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as may be necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees while at work.

Work near overhead power lines should not be performed unless those performing the work have received appropriate instruction and training. For example, the operator of any crane or mobile plant and the safety observer who carry out work within the accredited person zone specified in this code must have received training for work near overhead power lines conducted by a Registered Training Organisation. Refer to Appendix 4.

Employers must provide appropriate supervision and should recognise their supervisor's role in the management of the risks and the protection of employees. Close liaison between supervisors and employees is vital in ensuring the work is carried out in a safe manner.

Supervision of crane and plant operators working near overhead power lines should ensure that the control measures are fully implemented and followed at all times by employees. If you are supervising, it is your responsibility to ensure that the situation is safe for everyone.

The level and extent of supervision required will vary according to the safety aspects of each task and the skills of the worker. In determining the necessary level of supervision, an employer should consider:

- the complexity of the job environment in which the job is being done;
- the hazards at each work site;
- the worker's level of competence, experience and age.

The levels of supervision required for various tasks need to be described in policies and procedures.

2.4 Provision of information

Health and safety information may include:

- the results of any applicable written risk assessment;
- requirements of safe work method statements;
- a review of the written risk assessment and/or safe work method statements and standard operating procedures;
- any other relevant OHS information, such as type test information, documentation and signage.

Persons working near overhead power lines should always have, on request, access to written risk assessments and safe work method statements at the work site. Employers should brief employees and other workers as to the contents of written risk assessments and safe work method statements when work begins near overhead power lines, at regular intervals thereafter, and whenever there are changes to written risk assessments or new information about health and safety risks becomes available.

The employer should consult with their employees to ensure that such information and training is in a form that is accessible and easily understood. This is important where employees are from a non-English speaking background and/or have special needs or disabilities, and may have specific language or literacy requirements.

2.4.1 Safe work method statements

Chapter 8 of the OHS Regulation requires that safe work method statements (SWMS) be used for high risk construction work.

High-risk construction work may include, for example the following activities that may occur near overhead power lines:

- construction work involving structural alterations that require temporary support;
- construction work at a height above 3 metres;
- construction work involving excavation to a depth greater than 1.5 metres;
- demolition work for which a licence is not required;
- construction work involving the use of explosives;
- construction work near traffic or mobile plant;
- construction work in or around gas or electrical installations.

An example of a safe work method statement is included at Appendix 3 to assist in this.

2.5 Preparation for work to commence

Careful planning and preparation is an essential step to ensure that work is done safely. When preparing for the commencement of work all controls indicated by the risk assessment(s) and safe work method statement(s) as applicable must have been put in place and that no new hazards exist, or have been created.

Preparation should include:

- nature of the work planned and ways of dealing with changes as the work proceeds;
- the possible hazards and risks associated with the work;
- consultation with the network operator;
- communication and interaction between workers at the site;
- training, qualifications and competency of workers;
- checking the operation of plant and equipment, including the operation of limiting devices;
- proximity of persons, cranes, mobile plant, material and tools to overhead powerlines;
- proximity of persons to cranes and mobile plant;
- specific instructions for employees;
- workplace access and egress;
- emergency procedures, including first aid, evacuation and rescue; and
- environmental factors.

CHAPTER 3 – APPROACH DISTANCES WHEN WORKING NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES

3.1 Scope

This Chapter introduces a framework for work near overhead power lines. It provides guidance on general risk management principles, competency requirements and approach distances to live electrical conductors, including no go zones for cranes and plant (and their loads), as well as for vehicles, individuals and hand-held tools. It applies to persons with varying levels of qualification, training or knowledge.

This Chapter should be read in conjunction with the following Chapters, which provide risk management requirements for various types of workplace activity, including scaffolding (Chapter 6) and work near low voltage overhead service lines (Chapter 8), which specify a different set of approach distances to those described in this Chapter.

3.2 Basis of approach distances

This code is based on the assumption that without appropriate technical knowledge and experience of electricity distribution networks, workers that have not received training in overhead power line electrical hazards (ordinary persons) will not be able to identify the operating voltage of the live overhead power lines. When working near or operating cranes or plant near live overhead power lines such persons will not be able to recognise and avoid the inherent electrical hazards.


The approach distances specified in this Chapter take account of differing levels of technical knowledge and items of plant, and are substantially greater for ordinary persons than for personnel who are accredited. The approach distances for ordinary persons and accredited persons are based on those specified in the *National Guidelines for Safe Approach Distances to Electrical Apparatus*. In the National Guidelines, the approach distances were derived by –

- determining a distance to avoid electrical flashover; and
- providing additional allowance for inadvertent movements of the person, crane or plant relative to the overhead power lines, or the movement of the overhead power lines relative to the person, crane or plant.

3.2.1 Assessing the relevant approach distance

Prior to the start of any work near overhead power lines it is essential that the height and voltage of the overhead power lines (and if applicable the horizontal safety clearance) be assessed at the worksite. When assessing the relevant approach distances for the work a number of factors must be taken into account including,

- the possibility of errors in estimating distances, especially at higher voltages, where the approach distance is large. It may be necessary either to allow more clearance or to use methods that provide more accurate estimation of distances, for example, an ultrasonic cable height indicator, which provides a safe and accurate method of estimating distances near overhead power lines. If the height or voltage of the overhead power lines cannot be accurately determined consult the network operator.



WARNING

Do not attempt to directly measure the height of overhead power lines. Do not use conductive metallic objects or measuring devices such as metal tape measures for estimating the height of overhead power lines.

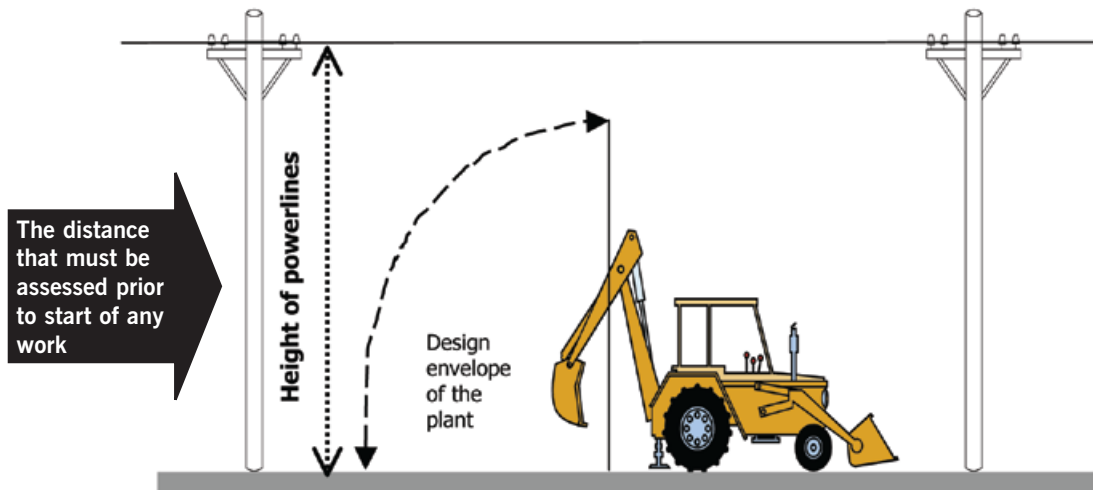


Figure 1: Distance that must be assessed for each worksite

- overhead power lines are made of metal and are therefore subject to expansion and contraction when heated and cooled. This can be a direct result of high ambient air temperature and/or excessive electrical load current passing through the conductors. Regardless of the cause, any expansion will result in gravity causing the power lines to sag downwards. Wind can also cause the power lines to swing from side to side. For this reason the approach distances must be increased either vertically or horizontally by the amount of conductor sag or swing at the point of work. Refer to Figure 2.

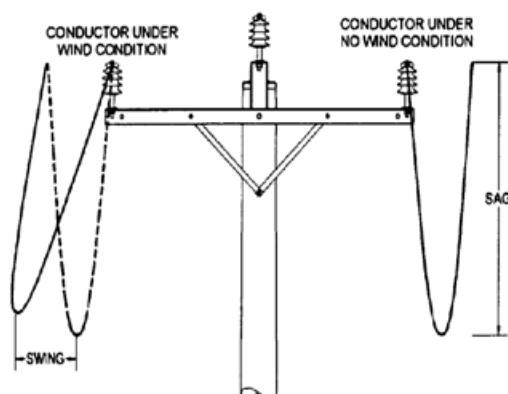


Figure 2: Illustration of overhead power line 'sag or swing'

- where more than one voltage is present, eg overhead power lines where two or more circuits operating at different voltages are supported on the same poles, the approach distance appropriate to each voltage must be maintained independently.
- increased clearances must be allowed where a risk assessment identifies a reasonable possibility of the load or lifting gear (crane hook, chains, slings, etc) moving or swinging towards the overhead power lines or associated electrical apparatus when the crane or item of mobile plant is operated.

3.2.2 Increases to approach distances

It is recognised that certain Australian Standards and industry practice in some States require greater approach distances than those described in this code. For certain types of work or classes of authorisation and competency, greater distances than that described in this code may be appropriate.

For example, the approach distances shown in Table 1 are less than those described in the Australian Standard AS 2550.5 Cranes, hoists and winches – Safe use Part 5: Mobile and Vehicle Loading Cranes, which is also gazetted as an approved industry code of practice. In the event of any inconsistencies between the Australian Standard and this code the approach distances specified in this code shall prevail.

Employers, self-employed persons and controllers of premises should determine the applicability of the approach distances described in this code for particular work circumstances and, if considered appropriate, specify greater approach distances for the work.

3.2.3 How close can I go to overhead power lines?

Once an assessment has been carried out of the worksite and the overhead power lines, a decision can be made on the approach distance for the proposed work. The approach distances and work zones described in this Chapter and illustrated in Figure 3 vary with the voltage of the overhead power lines and the level of accreditation of the person/s performing the work. The relevant approach distances are set out in the following tables:

- Table 1 provides the approach distances for ordinary persons. These are workers who have not received training in overhead power line electrical hazards and are restricted to work in the ordinary person zone. Refer to Section 3.3 and Figure 3.
- Table 2 provides reduced approach distances for accredited persons. These are workers who have successfully completed a recognised training course in overhead power line electrical hazards and are therefore permitted to work closer to the overhead power lines in the accredited person zone. Refer to Section 3.4 and Figure 3.
- Table 3 provides the approach distances for vehicles that are driven under overhead power lines. Refer to Section 3.6.

The approach distances vary with the voltage. They apply to:

- any part of a crane or item of mobile plant, including vehicles,
- any load being moved, including the slings, chains and other lifting gear,
- any person working at heights eg from an elevating work platform, scaffold, or other structure, or
- any hand tools, hand control lines, equipment or other material held by a person.

Note: Special approach distances apply for scaffolding work (Chapter 6) and work near low voltage overhead service lines (Chapter 8).

3.3 Ordinary Person Zone

Table 1 provides approach distances for:

- ordinary persons performing work near overhead power lines, (including plant, hand tools, equipment or any other material held by a person); or
- cranes (and their loads) and items of mobile plant operated by an ordinary person near overhead power lines.

Note: Where a written risk assessment determines it necessary, the use of a safety observer should also be considered for work performed by ordinary persons working outside but up to the approach distances specified in Table 1. The duties of the safety observer are described in Section 3.8.

TABLE 1

Approach distances for work performed by Ordinary Persons

Nominal phase to phase a.c. voltage (volts)	Approach distance (m)
Up to and including 132,000	3.0
Above 132,000 up to and including 330,000	6.0
Above 330,000	8.0
Nominal pole to earth d.c. voltage (volts)	Approach distance (m)
Up to and including +/- 1500 Volts	3.0

Note: Special approach distances apply for scaffolding work (Chapter 6) and work near low voltage overhead service lines (Chapter 8).

3.4 Accredited Person Zone

Table 2 provides approach distances for:

- accredited persons, with a safety observer who are performing work near overhead power lines (including plant, hand tools, equipment or any other material held by a person); or
- cranes (and their loads) and items of mobile plant operated by an accredited person with a safety observer near overhead power lines.

The approach distances in Table 2 are based on

- completion of a written risk assessment prior to the commencement of work,
- application of a safe system of work, which includes the use of a safety observer, and
- if determined by the written risk assessment, consultation with the network operator regarding the proposed work and compliance with any conditions imposed by the network operator for the work.

TABLE 2

Approach Distances for work performed by Accredited Persons, with a Safety Observer

Nominal phase to phase a.c. voltage (volts)	Approach distance (m)
Insulated low voltage cables up to 1000, including LV ABC	0.5
Un-insulated low voltage conductors up to 1000	1.0
Above 1000 up to and including 33,000	1.2
Above 33,000 up to and including 66,000	1.4
Above 66,000 up to and including 132,000	1.8
Above 132,000 up to and including 220,000	2.4
330,000	3.7
500,000	4.6
Nominal pole to earth d.c. voltage (volts)	Approach distance (m)
Up to +/- 1,500	1.0

Note: Special approach distances apply for scaffolding work (Chapter 6) and work near low voltage overhead service lines (Chapter 8).

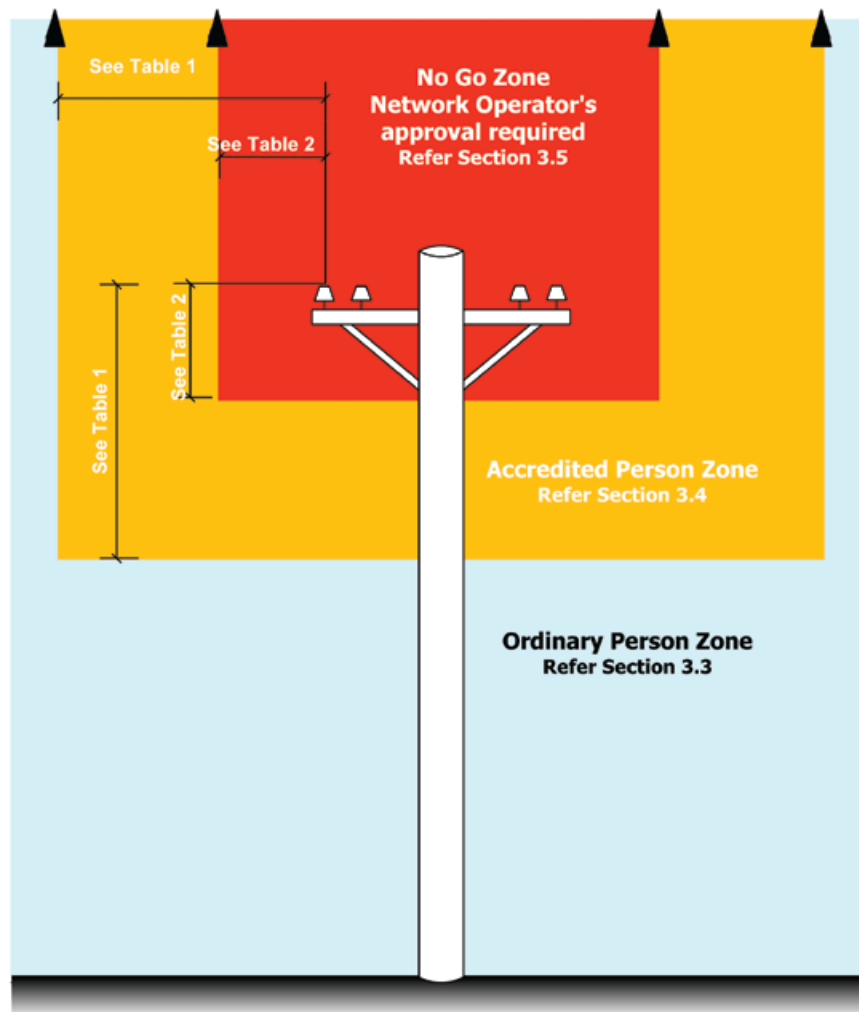


Figure 3 – Approach distances and work zones near overhead power lines

3.5 Work inside the No Go Zone – Approval of the network operator

The no go zone is the area around overhead power lines into which no part of a person or material or cranes or vehicles or items of mobile plant may encroach without the approval of the network operator.

Note:

- person includes hand tools, equipment or any other material held by a person.
- plant includes the load, controlling ropes and any other accessories associated with the plant.

If the work cannot be carried out without coming inside the no-go zone (closer than the approach distances listed in Table 2 or above the overhead power lines), prior to commencing work the employer must consult with and obtain the written approval of the network operator.

Note: The written approval should be available at the worksite and be able to be produced to a WorkCover Inspector, Principal Contractor, elected OHS representative, authorised representative or network operator.

3.6 Approach Distances for Vehicles

Table 3 provides approach distances for vehicles, mobile plant stowed for transit or with a design envelope up to an including 4.6 metres in height, which are driven by or operated by persons under overhead power lines.

When assessing the approach distance for a vehicle driven under overhead power lines a number of factors should be taken into account including:

- the approach distances specified in Table 3 are based on the fact that the design or transit envelope of the vehicle does not allow any part of the vehicle to come closer than the approach distances specified. This includes the load, exhaust pipe and attachments such as rotating/flashing lights or radio aerials. Refer to Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Transit envelope – The maximum overall height of the vehicle



- where a work activity involves a person working from, standing on or walking across the top of a vehicle the relevant approach distance specified in either Table 1 or Table 2 must be maintained. This may include for example the driver of a livestock transporter who may need to access the top of the vehicle to check livestock.
- where, as a result of the work being performed the distance between the conductors and the ground may decrease (for example when constructing a road or levee bank beneath overhead power lines or where the ground level is raised during the work), then the distance between the vehicle must be continually re-assessed to ensure that the relevant approach distances are being maintained.
- any additional assessment factors that may be relevant for the operation of the vehicle as described in section 3.2.1.

TABLE 3**Approach Distances for Vehicles**

Nominal phase to phase a.c. voltage (volts)	Approach distance (m)
Low voltage conductors up to 1000	0.6
Above LV, up to and including 33,000	0.9
Above 33,000 up to and including 132,000	2.1
Above 132,000 up to and including 220,000	2.9
330,000	3.4
500,000	4.4
Nominal pole to earth d.c. voltage (volts)	Approach distance (m)
Up to and including +/- 1500 Volts	0.9

3.7 Work near overhead power lines – General risk management principles

The approach distances set out in this Chapter are only part of an overall safe system of work, which must be implemented by employers and self-employed persons working near overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus. In implementing a safe system of work consideration should be given to the following risk control measures:

- The employer has in place an effective risk management process, as part of a systematic occupational health and safety management system.
- Appropriate workplace hazard identification and written risk assessments are carried out as required by the OHS Regulation in consultation with the workers performing the work.
- Consultation with the network operator regarding the proposed work and compliance with any conditions imposed by the network operator for the work.
- The approach distances used are appropriate for the levels of accreditation of the workers performing the work. Refer to Sections 3.3 and 3.4
- Operators and other workers are provided with information and instruction about the safety precautions needed and the requirements of this code, as well as appropriate training, supervision and safe work practices and procedures.
- An essential requirement of a safe system of work is that workers are competent to carry out the work concerned. This code specifies the competency requirements (in respect of overhead power line electrical safety awareness) for crane and mobile plant operators and safety observers. Refer to Sections 3.8 and 3.9.
- An effective communication system is in place for the personnel performing the work.
- An effective process is in place to monitor compliance with the adopted risk control measures, safe work practices and procedures for work carried out near overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus.

3.8 Competence and knowledge of this code

In order to carry out work at distances less than the approach distances specified in Table 1 the following workers must be accredited in accordance with Section 3.9 of this code,

- the operator of a crane,
- the operator of mobile plant (including an elevating work platform),
- a safety observer.

3.8.1 Training and Competence – Accredited Person

Accredited persons such as operators of cranes, mobile plant and elevating work platforms who carry out work closer than the approach distances specified in Table 1 and safety observers who observe the work must have successfully completed an appropriate training course (eg Crane and Plant Electrical Safety Course) relating to work near overhead power lines that has been conducted by a registered training organisation. Refer to Appendix 4 of this code for a training course framework, which is recognised by WorkCover NSW and network operators.

Note: 'Successful completion' includes a satisfactory competency assessment.

The registered training organisation, which provides the training and competency assessment required by this code must provide the person concerned with a statement of attainment or written certification of his/her successful completion of assessment, that has an identifying number particular to that person.

Employers should maintain appropriate training and assessment records for 'accredited persons' and other employees who carry out work near overhead power lines.

3.8.2 Maintenance of competency

The employer of accredited persons must ensure that those persons are either re-assessed or re-trained annually to ensure their on-going competency to perform activities associated with work near overhead power lines.

Re-assessment or re-training must cover as a minimum the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure safe work practices near overhead power lines, approved resuscitation procedures and emergency procedures to be followed in the event of an accident.

Following re-assessment, persons who have failed to maintain competency through the regular on the job application of learnt skills and knowledge must undertake refresher training and competency assessment.

3.9 Safety Observer – General requirements

The safety observer is a person specifically assigned the duty of observing the work near live overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus in order to –

- warn personnel or the crane or plant operator so as to ensure the approach distances are being maintained, and
- warn of any other unsafe conditions.

The safety observer must –

- be used whenever the work activity is likely to be performed in the Accredited Person Zone.

Note: Where a written risk assessment determines it necessary, the use of a safety observer should also be considered for work outside but up to the Accredited Person Zone.

- be positioned at a suitable location to effectively observe both the overhead power lines and plant;
- be able to immediately and effectively communicate with the operator of the crane or mobile plant, or other personnel if required;
- ensure that all personnel stay outside the specified approach distance (unless performing a rescue in accordance with approved procedures or carrying out a specific task that is described in the safe work method statement eg a crane dogman holding a non-conductive tag line attached to a load suspended from a mobile crane);
- not carry out any other work while acting as a safety observer, which includes the passing of tools, equipment or materials directly to the personnel performing the work;
- not observe more than one work activity at a time; and
- continue to monitor the work activity being carried out and have the authority to suspend the work at any time.

CHAPTER 4 – OPERATING CRANES AND MOBILE PLANT NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES


4.1 Scope

In addition to the general requirements described in Chapter 3, this chapter details any variations applicable where a person operates a crane or an item of mobile plant near overhead power lines, including, but not limited to the following items of mobile plant:

- cranes (including mobile cranes and vehicle loading cranes);
- concrete placing booms;
- elevating work platforms (EWPs);
- mobile plant (including truck operators engaged in tipping loads, restraining loads or other associated work);
- load shifting equipment (including forklifts).
- excavation and earthmoving equipment
- high load transportation vehicles

However, the application of this Chapter is not limited to any particular type or class of mobile plant or equipment.

Note: This chapter is not intended to cover cranes and mobile plant when they are retracted and correctly stowed when travelling on a public road or where the design envelope of the crane or item of mobile plant is less than 4.6 metres in height.



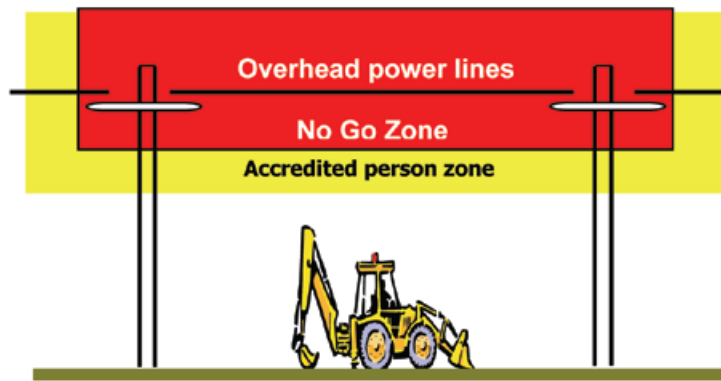
WARNING

For the operation of cranes, mobile plant and other types of load shifting equipment the approach distances specified in this code of practice are greater than those described in the National Certificate of Competency – Assessment Instruments. Where any discrepancy exists between the National Assessment Instruments and this code, the code shall prevail.

4.2 Hazard identification

Before operating a crane or item of mobile plant, the operator or other person in control of the work must take reasonable care to inspect the workplace to identify potential hazards, including any live overhead power lines or other associated electrical apparatus in the vicinity of the workplace.

All overhead power lines should be treated as live unless the operator of the crane or mobile plant has received an access authority or other form of written documentation from the network operator.



Mobile plant including cranes, excavators, EWPs, earth moving machinery, tipper trucks and concrete placing booms whose design envelope is within the approach distances specified in Table 1 must be controlled by safe systems of work as described in this chapter.

Figure 6: Cranes and mobile plant working near overhead power lines

4.3 Risk assessment



Risk assessment involves looking at the:

- likelihood (which is a combination of length of time and frequency of exposure); and the
- likely severity, of any injury or illness that may occur.

If you have identified a hazard involving overhead power lines where it is foreseeable that the work activity, crane or item of mobile plant will be required to or might inadvertently encroach on the approach distances specified for ordinary persons set out in Table 1, a written risk assessment must be completed which considers the following factors:

- consulting the network operator regarding the proposed work;
- can the electricity supply be de-energised?
- the location and voltage of the overhead power lines;
- the number of people involved and their individual needs;
- the nature of work undertaken;
- the nature, size and shape of the load to be moved, eg dimensions, surface area and whether the load is conductive;
- the setting up and packing up processes;
- the safe work practices and procedures in use;
- the type of crane, mobile plant, machinery and equipment to be used and its design envelope;
- site conditions, stability of crane or mobile plant and suspended loads;
- the potential for inadvertent movement of the crane or mobile plant, the load, persons and electrical equipment in the area;
- the qualifications, competency, skill and experience of people doing the work;
- vehicular traffic, pedestrians, or livestock that could interfere with the work;
- prevailing or unexpected wind strength and direction and weather conditions;
- foreseeable abnormal conditions that may exist at the worksite.

Having assessed the risks, action must now be taken to ensure that the risks are eliminated or controlled. Employers need to ensure adequate supervision of workers to make sure that control measures are applied.


Listed below in section 4.4 are steps to consider. Every workplace is different, so select the controls that are the right ones for you.

4.4 Control measures for cranes and mobile plant operating near overhead power lines

The highest practical level of control should be used. This does not preclude the additional use of appropriate lower level controls. In determining the control measures appropriate for a particular task consideration must be given to the terrain and ground conditions, weather conditions, lighting, and other work in the vicinity as well as the nature of the actual task to be carried out.

4.4.1 Elimination

Eliminate the risk of electrocution, electric shock or burns by arranging for the network operator to isolate the electricity supply for the duration of the work. Consideration may also be given, following consultation and agreement of the network operator, to re-route the overhead power lines away from the crane or mobile plant or replace existing overhead powerlines with underground cables.

	<p style="text-align: center;">WARNING</p> <p>Even if it is believed that the supply has been isolated, it must be assumed that all conductors and components are live until an access authority or other form of written documentation has been received from the network operator.</p>
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The employer, self-employed person or operator of the crane or mobile plant should:

- (a) discuss options for de-energising or re-routing the electricity supply with the network operator or in the case of work involving private overhead power lines, the person in control of the premises;
- (b) consider working at another time when the electricity supply can be isolated; and
- (c) investigate whether the section of the overhead power lines that needs to be de-energised can be isolated, while leaving the remainder connected.

4.4.2 Separation

If the risk cannot be eliminated, then separate the hazard from the crane or mobile plant and the personnel by:

- (a) using an alternative crane or mobile plant which cannot encroach on the approach distances;
- (b) limiting the hoisting, slewing or other movements of the crane or mobile plant such as:
 - mechanical stops or interlocking of the motion of the crane or mobile plant to prevent it from being moved by power within the approach distance;
 - mechanical constraints on the jib, boom, or other part of the crane or mobile plant likely to contact live overhead power lines or associated electrical apparatus as a result of surge or backlash;
 - using cranes or mobile plant fitted with programmable zone limiting devices.
- (c) setting up the crane or mobile plant in a position that keeps the design envelope outside the approach distance.

Note: Consideration should be given to any loads suspended by the crane or mobile plant or when being moved by load shifting equipment.

(d) minimising unexpected movement of the crane or mobile plant through:

- additional outriggers, supports or packing to increase the stability of the crane or mobile plant;
- preparation of the ground or surface, or adjustment or servicing of the crane or mobile plant, to minimise surge or backlash;

Increased clearances must also be allowed where there is a reasonable possibility the load or lifting gear (crane hook, chains, slings, etc) moving or swinging towards the overhead power lines or associated electrical apparatus when the crane or item of mobile plant is operated.

(e) providing marking barriers to define areas that the crane or mobile plant should not enter such as by:

- using rigid or tape barriers to mark off areas under overhead power lines;
- arranging for the network operator to mark the limit of the approach distance with high visibility 'bunting' or similar. Refer to Figure 7 below.



Figure 7: Illustration of a visual tape bunting fitted under overhead power lines.

(f) providing electrical separation between the people and hazard in accordance with the guidance outlined in Section 4.5 – Workers in contact with the crane, load or mobile plant.

4.4.3 Administrative controls

Support elimination and separation controls by taking the following precautions:

(a) managing and supervising the work to ensure that:

- the work is done very carefully and in an un-hurried, considered manner (haste can be dangerous);
- the employer's safe work method statements are rigorously followed;
- the appropriate persons involved in the work are accredited in accordance with the requirements of Section 3.8 of this code.

(b) making the hazard visible by arranging for the network operator to effectively identify exposed live low voltage conductors (up to an including 1000 volts) by using approved visual indicators such as sheeting or sleeves eg 'tiger tails'. In this situation the 'tiger tails' should extend a minimum distance of 5 metres beyond the extremities of where the crane or item of mobile plant will be operating. A competent person should visually inspect the tiger tails each day prior to commencing the crane, or mobile plant operations. If they have moved or been damaged the network operator should be contacted to ensure the tiger tails are replaced or located in the correct position. Refer to Section 9.1 of this code.

- (c) planning for emergencies including:
- having fire-fighting equipment that is suitable for electrical fires at the site and readily accessible;
 - having an appropriate first aid kit available at the worksite.
- (d) ensuring that a safety observer is used whenever a crane, mobile plant or load is in motion and is likely to come closer than the approach distances listed in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 3. The duties of the safety observer for work involving cranes and mobile plant is described in Section 3.9 of this code.
- (e) considering the fitting of a warning device to the crane or mobile plant that alerts the operator when the crane or mobile plant has entered energised high voltage overhead power line zones. Warning: These devices are not a substitute for the proper management of safe work practices and procedures.
- (f) using warning signs to indicate the location of overhead power lines and/or defined work areas. Refer to Figure 8 below.



Figure 8: Overhead power lines warning sign

4.5 Workers in contact with the crane, load or mobile plant

No-one may remain in contact with any part of a crane, load or mobile plant and the ground or other earthed situation while the crane or mobile plant is being operated closer than the approach distances listed for ordinary persons in Table 1 of this code, unless additional precautions are taken to prevent electric shock, as follows.

4.5.1 Operators

The operator may handle the controls of a crane or item of mobile plant while standing on the ground or while in an earthed situation only if -

- the controls are effectively insulated (consultation with the network operator will be necessary to verify effective insulation); or
- are wireless remote control; or
- the operator wears low voltage insulating gloves – provided that the live electrical apparatus is low voltage; or
- for low voltage, the operator stands on a rubber insulating mat 900mm x 900mm x 6 mm thick that is clean and dry; or
- the operator stands on an 'equipotential conductive mat' which is electrically connected to all metalwork associated with the controls.

4.5.2 Other workers

Other workers at the workplace may contact the crane, mobile plant or load while standing on the ground or while in an earthed situation only if one of the following control measures is observed -

- they wear low voltage insulating gloves – provided that the overhead power lines or electrical apparatus is low voltage; **or**
- effective insulation is provided on the overhead powerlines or electrical apparatus, or the crane, load or mobile plant or it's parts to ensure that even if it contacts the overhead powerlines or electrical apparatus, no-one would receive an electric shock; **or**
- control of the load by non-conductive tail ropes whenever uncontrolled motion could allow it to come within the approach distance (as long as the insulating properties of the rope are appropriate to the operating voltage), **or**
- they are positioning or removing lifting gear from a crane hook or the load while it is stationary; **or**
- they are adjusting outriggers, jacks, packing's, chocks or similar, as long as the crane, load or mobile plant is not being moved.

4.6 Competency requirements

In order to carry out crane and mobile plant operations closer than the approach distances specified in Table 1, the following personnel must be accredited as described in section 3.8 of this code,

- the operator of a crane,
- the operator of mobile plant (including an elevating work platform),
- a safety observer.

4.7 Safety observer for crane and mobile plant operations

A safety observer as described in Section 3.9 must be assigned the duty of observing the approach of a crane or mobile plant (and its load) to the live overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus.

The safety observer must –

- be used whenever the crane, load, mobile plant or persons working from the plant are in motion and are likely to come closer than the approach distances specified in Table 1;

Note: Where a written risk assessment determines it necessary, the use of a safety observer should also be considered for work performed by ordinary persons working outside the approach distances specified in Table 1.

- be positioned at a suitable location to effectively observe both the overhead power lines and plant;
- be able to immediately and effectively communicate with the operator of the crane or mobile plant, or other personnel if required;
- ensure that all personnel stay outside the specified approach distance (unless performing a rescue in accordance with approved procedures or carrying out a specific task that is described in the safe work method statement eg a crane dogman holding a non-conductive tag line attached to a load suspended from a mobile crane);
- not carry out any other work while acting as a safety observer, which includes the passing of tools, equipment or materials directly to the personnel performing the work;
- not observe more than one crane or item of mobile plant at a time; and

- continue to monitor the work activity being carried out and have the authority to suspend the work at any time,

In addition to the above requirements, the safety observer must not be located on the workbasket of an elevating work platform while observing the work being undertaken from that workbasket.

A safety observer is not necessary in the following circumstances –

- for an item of stationary plant, once completely erected, if it is not located below the overhead power lines or electrical apparatus and is located horizontally outside the approach distances specified in Table 2;
- if an effective limiting device has been set to prevent any component of a crane, mobile plant or load coming closer than the approach distances in Table 2, as long as the limiting device is effective under stress conditions and is regularly inspected and tested by a competent person; or
- where, the design of the crane or mobile plant limits movement so that no part of the crane, mobile plant or load can come closer than the approach distances specified in Table 2.

4.8 Earthing systems for cranes and mobile plant

The chassis of a crane or item of mobile plant may, where practical, be earthed and bonded. A system of work must be adopted that ensures workers are kept clear of cranes and mobile plant when work is carried out near live overhead power lines and workers be advised of the effectiveness of the earthing system.

For specific advice and guidance about the earthing of a crane or item of mobile plant consult with the network operator.

4.9 Notices to be fixed to cranes and mobile plant

Cranes or items of mobile plant intended for use, or used, near live overhead power lines must be fitted with a warning notice or label, conforming to Appendix 1 of this code, listing the approach distances for ordinary persons as set out in Table 1.

The notice or label must be maintained in a legible condition and be displayed at each set of controls and must be readily visible to the operator.

Note: Where a crane or item of mobile plant is fitted with notices in accordance with the Interim Guide, the existing notices may be retained provided the plant is operated to the distances shown on the notice. Only columns described in the Table A notice for ‘non-electrical work’ or Table B for ‘unqualified personnel’ must be applied in relation to work under this code.

CHAPTER 5 – TREE AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES

5.1 Scope

In addition to the general requirements described in Chapter 3, this chapter details any variations applicable where a person works on trees such as, cutting, trimming, treating with chemicals or other processes, trees and other foliage near live overhead power lines where:

- a person or something the person is holding or is in contact with or could come closer than the relevant approach distance specified in either Table 1 or Table 2 of this code or;
- the work creates risk of damage to overhead power lines or electrical apparatus.

Tree and vegetation management carried out by or for network operators is excluded from this section as it is covered by the requirements of the *Electricity Supply (Safety and Network Management) Regulation 2002*.

5.2 Hazard identification and risk assessment

When carrying out the work, live overhead power lines are a potential hazard posing substantial risk of death or serious injury.

During tree and vegetation management electrical hazards can be encountered through a variety of circumstances. These include but are not limited to:

- branches or other vegetation falling onto power lines during trimming operations
- tools such as power saws or power trimmers coming into direct contact with power lines or other associated electrical apparatus
- mobile plant, for example an elevating work platform (EWP), coming into contact with overhead power lines or other associated electrical apparatus
- power lines becoming broken and falling on the ground, footpath or road
- wind blowing branches or limbs against overhead power lines
- high winds resulting in the loss of control while lowering materials
- unexpected movement of the worker, mobile plant or the vegetation relative to the worker.

If a hazard involving tree management work near overhead power lines has been identified, a written risk assessment must be undertaken by the employer to determine the risk to persons encroaching within the relevant approach distances. This step will help determine the level of risk associated with the identified hazards and establish a priority list based on the level of risk.

5.3 Eliminating or controlling risks – General risk factors

The risks associated with electrical hazards arise from coming near live conductors. The best means of eliminating the risks is to prevent people, their plant and equipment, as well as any materials from coming close enough to live conductors for direct contact or flash over to occur.

Care needs to be taken in planning the work to identify the ways in which people may be exposed to electrical hazards when the work is undertaken and determine the most effective means to ensure the approach distances are maintained from the live overhead power lines.

In addition to ensuring that the work near overhead powerlines is avoided, other factors should be considered:

- always assume an overhead power line or associated electrical apparatus to be energised or 'live' unless an access authority or other written documentation is received from the network operator.
- if a telecommunication cable is encountered, never assume that the operating voltage is harmless.
- a tree or branch of a tree can conduct electricity even in dry conditions. Never assume that a tree branch can safely rest on or against overhead power lines. If the tree or branch has the potential during the felling or cutting process to come closer than the approach distances specified in Table 1 the overhead power lines should be de-energised.
- trees that have grown into contact with live overhead power lines must not be cut by a person who is in an earthed situation (such as a standing on the ground or working from within the tree) unless a safe system of work is used that meets the requirements of the network operator.
- plant that comes near an overhead power line may become energised and pose a serious danger to the operator and any bystanders. Ensure that when operating plant (ie any machines (including chain saws), tools or equipment) near live overhead powerlines that the relevant approach distances are maintained. Operations should cease where trees or persons are in danger of coming closer than the relevant approach distances.
- manage traffic and pedestrians at the worksite to ensure approach distances are maintained and that members of the public are kept at a safe distance. If the work near overhead power lines requires a change in traffic direction or vehicle speed limits, full traffic control is required in accordance with the Roads and Traffic Authority's requirements.
- assess the weather conditions, including electrical storms, significant rain or excessive wind velocities that could impact on the proposed work.

5.4 Requirements for Ordinary Persons carrying out tree and vegetation management

An ordinary person must not:

- climb a tree closer than 3 metres to live overhead power lines, or cut any branch that may come closer than 3 metres to live overhead power lines as a result of the work, or
- allow any part of their body or anything they are holding or that is attached to their body, or anything they are using, to come closer than the approach distances specified in Table 1 of this code when carrying out the work near live overhead power lines.

Ensure the work is not carried out above overhead power lines or where any part of the tree or vegetation could fall or otherwise be carried closer than the approach distances specified in Table 1.

If there is a reasonable possibility of the work being carried out above overhead power lines or coming closer than the approach distances specified in Table 1 the work must be carried out by accredited persons who have been trained and have current competency to carry out 'tree and vegetation management' near live overhead power lines. See Section 5.5 of this code.

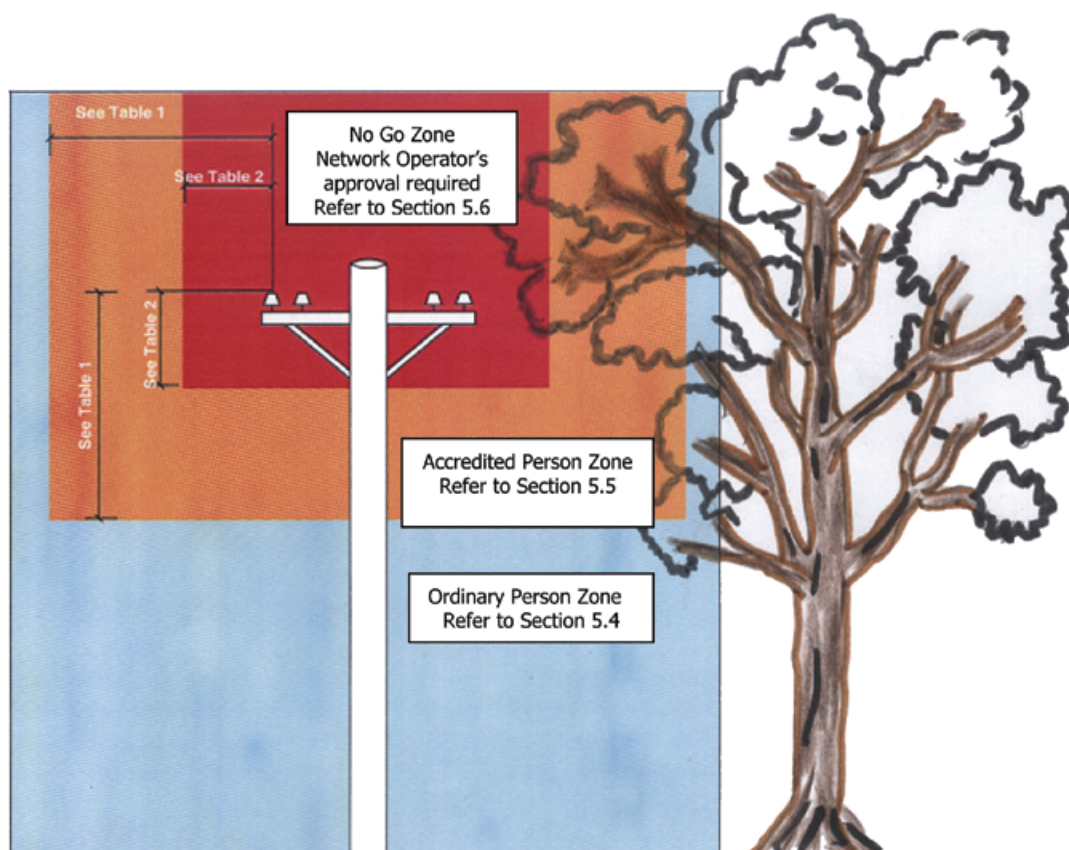


Figure 9 – Work zones for tree management near overhead power lines

5.5 Requirements for Accredited Persons carrying out tree and vegetation management

Accredited persons who have current competency to carry out 'tree and vegetation management' near live overhead power lines may carry out the work in accordance with the approach distances specified in Table 2 of this code provided the following requirements are observed,

- a written risk assessment is completed for the work and a safe system of work is implemented, which includes a safety observer, and
- if determined by the written risk assessment, consultation with the network operator regarding the proposed work and compliance with any conditions imposed by the network operator for the work.

Note: Training and assessment requirements for accredited persons, which include safety observers are described in Sections 3.8 and 3.9 of this code.

5.6 Tree management inside the No Go Zone – Approval of the network operator

The no go zone is the area around overhead power lines into which no part of a person or material or cranes or vehicles or items of mobile plant may encroach without the written approval of the network operator.

- person includes hand tools, equipment or any other material held by a person.
- plant includes the load, controlling ropes and any other accessories associated with the plant.

Work required on tree and vegetation that is inside the no-go zone (closer to live overhead power lines than the approach distances specified in Table 2 of this code) must only be performed by authorised persons approved by the network operator.

5.7 Trees or branches contacting live overhead power lines

While it is not permitted to work on trees where they (or their branches) may fall on overhead power lines, it is important to know what action to take if a branch or tree comes into contact with a live overhead power line, whether through pruning, wind, storm or other damage.

When this situation arises, *do not touch any part of the branch or tree*. If any part of a branch is touching live power lines, the entire branch may be 'live', including the leaves. Contact with any part of it may result in electric shock, burns or electrocution.

Immediately contact the network operator and keep all persons clear of the area while waiting for assistance.

Other aspects of tree and vegetation management safe work practices and procedures can be found in the *Code of Practice – Amenity Tree Industry*.

CHAPTER 6 – WORK INVOLVING SCAFFOLDING NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES

6.1 Scope

In addition to the general requirements described in Chapter 3, this chapter details any variations applicable where the work involves the erection, dismantling and use of fixed scaffolding near overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus with an operating voltage up to and including 33 kV a.c. For scaffolding work above this voltage the network operator must be consulted and any special conditions imposed by the network operator complied with.

The guidance provided in this Chapter should be read in conjunction with AS/NZS 4576 – Guidelines for Scaffolding, which is an approved industry code of practice. In the Standard a 4 metre approach distance is provided for metallic scaffolding used near overhead power lines. This approach distance is used as a reference point for persons planning and undertaking scaffolding work as described in this Chapter.

For work involving the use of mobile aluminium scaffolding refer to the risk control measures for mobile plant that are described in Chapter 4 of this code.

6.2 Hazard identification

Before undertaking any scaffolding work where the work might come closer than the 4 metre approach distance specified in AS/NZS 4576 – Guidelines for Scaffolding, an inspection must be carried out at the worksite and reasonable care taken to identify any potential hazards.

Hazards may include:

- live overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus;
- deteriorated or broken down insulation on the conductors or electrical apparatus;
- scaffolding coming into contact with overhead power lines; and
- possibility of hand held tools, equipment or materials coming into contact with overhead power lines.

6.3 Risk assessment

If a hazard involving overhead power lines has been identified, a written risk assessment must be undertaken by the employer to determine the risk to persons encroaching within the 4 metre approach distance. This step will help determine the level of risk associated with the identified hazards and establish a priority list based on the level of risk. If the scaffolding work is above 3 metres in height it must also be supported by a safe work method statement for the work. Refer to Appendices 2 and 3 of this code.

The following factors may be included in the risk assessment:

- the type of work activities being undertaken, tools, equipment, scaffolding and materials being used;
- proximity of the work activity or scaffolding to the overhead power lines;
- environmental conditions, such as rain, wind or uneven terrain, which may bring a risk of unexpected movement of tools, equipment, scaffolding or material held by workers.

6.4 Eliminating or controlling risks – general risk factors

Once the hazards associated with scaffolding work near the overhead power lines have been identified and assessed, then control measures must be implemented to eliminate the risk. If it is not practicable to do so, the risks associated with the hazard must then be controlled.

The use of specific control measures to eliminate or control identified risks should be done on the basis of the risk assessment. In particular, consider the following:

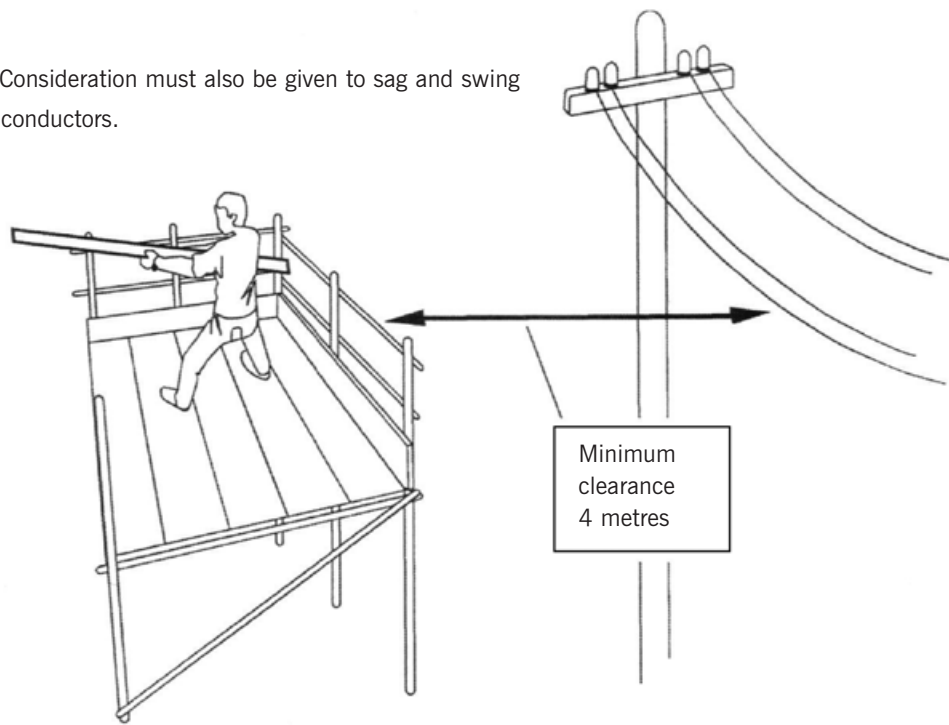
1. Eliminating the hazard. This could involve de-energising the overhead power lines during the work. Consideration may also be given, following consultation and agreement of the network operator, to re-route the overhead power lines away from the scaffolding or replace existing overhead powerlines with underground cables.
2. Separating the hazard. This could mean erecting a physical barrier on the scaffold to prevent a person or anything held by a person, or attached to the person, encroaching with the 4 metre approach distance.
3. Minimising the risk by engineering means. This could mean substituting the scaffold with another means of access and egress, such as an elevated work platform or using an insulated fibreglass extension handle on a paint roller, instead of a conductive aluminium extension handle.
4. Introduce administrative controls. This may include planning and where relevant documenting the safe work method statements before starting work or using a safety observer to warn people before they encroach within the 4 metre approach distance. The duties of a safety observer are outlined in Section 3.9 of this code. Making the hazard visible by arranging for the network operator to effectively identify exposed live low voltage conductors (up to and including 1000 volts a.c.) by using approved visual indicators eg 'tiger tails'. Refer Section 9.1 of this code.
5. Use appropriate personal protective equipment. This includes the use of electrically tested insulating gloves by anyone who may be at risk of coming closer than the 4 metre approach distance.

A combination of the above control measures is required to be taken to minimise the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable if no single measure is sufficient for that purpose.

6.5 Control measures for the erection and dismantling of scaffolding near overhead power lines up to and including 33kV

- (a) Ensure a thorough examination and assessment is undertaken of the surroundings prior to the erection or dismantling of the scaffold near overhead powerlines. No scaffold work should commence until the presence, location, type and operating voltage of all overhead power lines are determined by a competent person.
- (b) Overhead powerlines should be de-energised and an access authority or other form of written documentation obtained from the network operator if the scaffold and the overhead powerlines is or has the potential to come within the 4 metre approach distance. Refer to Figure 10 below.
- (c) If there is the risk that the 4 metre approach distance cannot be maintained, the network operator must be contacted and a written risk assessment and safe work method statement including safe systems of work developed for the activities associated with the erection, use and dismantling of the scaffolding.

Note: Consideration must also be given to sag and swing of the conductors.



Note: End protection omitted for clarity

Figure 10 – A 4 metre approach distance applies in any direction where metallic scaffold is erected, used or dismantled near overhead power lines.

- (d) Where low voltage overhead powerlines (up to and including 1000 volts) cannot be de-energised and isolated, 'tiger tails' should be provided and installed by the network operator for the full length of the scaffolding plus a minimum distance beyond each end of the scaffolding of 5 metres. A competent person should visually inspect the tiger tails each day prior to commencing scaffolding operations. If the tiger tails have moved or been damaged the network operator must be contacted to ensure the tiger tails are replaced or located in the correct position.

Note: Tiger tails may be used to provide a useful visual indication to people working in the area of overhead power lines. They should not be regarded as providing protection against mechanical interference nor should they be regarded as providing electrical protection from electrical hazards. Refer to Section 9.1 of this code for further guidance.

- (e) Electrical wires or apparatus that pass through a scaffold must be de-energised or fully enclosed to the requirements of the network operator. These requirements must incorporate full enclosure of the wires or electrical apparatus by a non-conductive material such as moisture resistant flooring – grade particle board, dry timber, dry plywood or similar dry non-conductive material as approved by the network operator. Refer to Section 6.6 and Figure 11.
- (f) To prevent a person or anything held by a person, or attached to the person, coming closer than the 4 metre approach distance the network operator may require the erection of a hoarding on the external face of the scaffolding and, if applicable a suitable enclosure on the internal side of the scaffold. Refer to Section 6.6 and Figure 11.

Example of live low voltage overhead power lines passing through a scaffold that has been fully enclosed in a non-conductive material to the requirements of the network operator.



Figure 11 – Enclosure of overhead powerlines

6.6 Erected Scaffolding – Use of a hoarding and enclosure for reduced safety clearances

This section describes the requirements for the use of a hoarding and, if applicable, a suitable enclosure between an erected scaffolding and a live overhead power line when a non-conductive hoarding and enclosure is used to provide an impenetrable barrier to persons, tools, materials and equipment.

The A and B clearances shown in Figure 12 are horizontal safety clearances and vertical mechanical clearances from the conductors and will be advised by the network operator prior to the erection of the scaffolding near the overhead power lines.

The following installation conditions apply for the use of a hoarding and enclosure for reduced safety clearances,

- Gaps between fitted sheets of plywood must not exceed 3mm.
- No exposed cut or drilled holes are permitted in the sheets of plywood.
- Scaffolder is responsible for attaching plywood to the scaffold, and ensuring that the arrangement can sustain an appropriate wind load.
- Warning signs must be affixed to the safe side of the hoarding warning of the presence of the electrical hazard on the other side of the hoarding and warning that the hoarding must not be removed.
- A competent person should visually inspect the hoarding and, if applicable the enclosure on a daily basis to ensure the hoarding and enclosure are in a satisfactory condition and remain impenetrable.

Further guidance on the erection, dismantling and use of scaffolding can be found in the Australian Standard AS/NZS 4576 – Guidelines for Scaffolding.

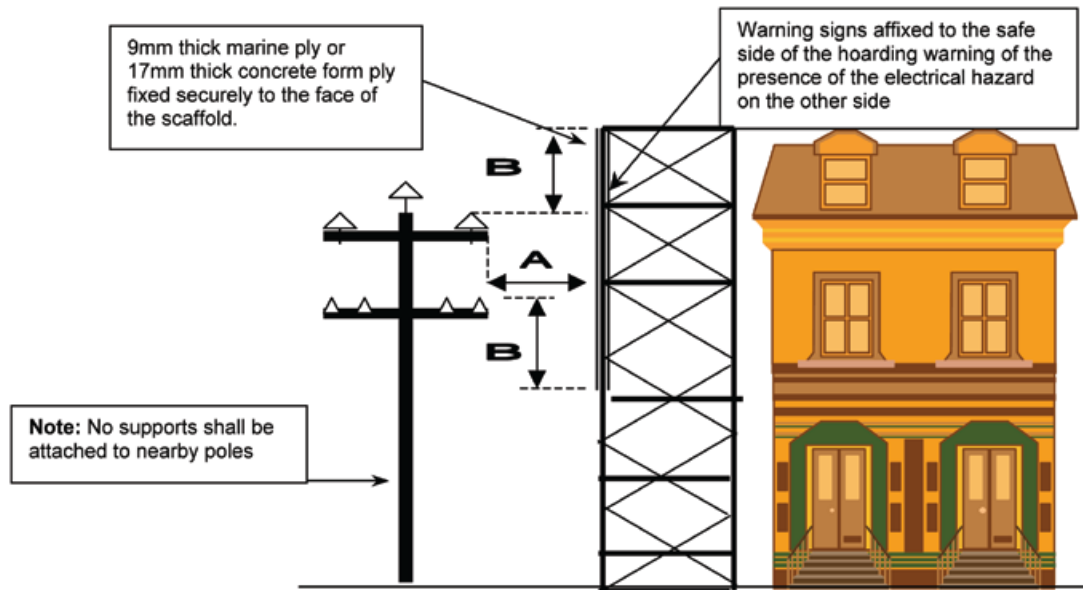


Figure 12 – Scaffolding with hoarding

CHAPTER 7 – AGRICULTURAL WORK NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES

7.1 Scope

In addition to the general requirements listed in Chapter 3, this chapter details any variations applicable where work is being conducted at rural workplaces where:

- the person or something the person is operating or holding could contact overhead power lines or come closer than the approach distances specified in Table 1 of this code or;
- the work creates risk of damage to overhead power lines or electrical apparatus.

Examples of such work include:

- the use of lifting or elevating plant or agricultural plant such as grain augers, hay bale elevators, cotton harvesting equipment, tipper and livestock transport trucks, travelling irrigators or harvesters under or near overhead power lines;
- handling irrigation pipes under or near overhead power lines;
- moving or relocating agricultural plant, such as folding cultivators, where the transit (stowed) height of the equipment is greater than its operating height;
- any other work that involves the risk of a person or anything attached to or held by a person, coming into contact with overhead power lines.

7.2 Hazard identification

Many people have been killed by electrocution when metal parts of agricultural plant (such as augers, field bins, harvesters or tip trucks) have come into contact with or close to live overhead power lines. Such accidents usually occur when the operator has not lowered the equipment before moving it or has raised the item of mobile plant upwards into the live overhead power lines. For example,

- working near and in the process may come into contact with machinery operating near overhead powerlines;
- driving machinery with tall attachments through paddocks where overhead powerlines exist; or
- operating or moving tipper trucks, mobile silos, field bins, harvesters or other large rural machinery (cotton harvesters, field irrigators) under or near live overhead power lines; or
- moving or re-arranging long metallic irrigation pipes.

Where work is carried out near live overhead power lines, the height and location of the power lines needs to be identified as part of an overall site hazard identification process. Contact should be made with the electricity network operator who can assist with this process.

Operators of agricultural plant and equipment also must be made aware of the design height and the transit (stowed) height of the mobile plant they operate.

7.3 Risk assessment

If a hazard involving overhead power lines has been identified, a written risk assessment must be undertaken to determine the risk of any part of the agricultural plant or equipment coming near or into contact with the overhead power lines. This step will help to determine the level of risk associated with the identified hazards and establish a priority list based on the level of risk.

The following factors may be relevant to the risk assessment:

- the type of work activities being undertaken or agricultural equipment being used;
- proximity of the work to the overhead power lines and the height of the overhead power lines;
- environmental conditions, such as rain, wind or uneven terrain, which may bring an increased risk;
- visibility of the overhead power lines and their supporting structures;
- location of overhead power lines supporting structures such as poles and towers in relation to the agricultural work to be performed;
- how often the work will need to be done near the overhead power lines;
- proximity of stationery or fixed plant and equipment to overhead power lines.

7.4 Control measures for agricultural work near overhead power lines

Once the hazards associated with agricultural work near overhead power lines have been identified and assessed then control measures must be implemented to eliminate the risk. If it is not practicable to do so, the risks associated with the hazard must then be controlled.

The use of specific control measures to eliminate or control identified risks should be done on the basis of the risk assessment. In particular, consider the following:

1. Eliminating the hazard. Identify the location of overhead power lines and relocate the plant and equipment, such as a mobile silo or tipper trucks away from the overhead power lines. Lower augers before transporting to eliminate the risk of contacting overhead power lines. Keep mobile irrigator sprayed water at least 8 metres away from overhead power lines. Consideration may also be given, following consultation and agreement of the network operator, to relocating the overhead power lines or having them run underground. In this case consult with the network operator.
2. Separating the hazard. This could mean erecting a physical barrier to prevent any part of the agricultural plant encroaching the approach distance specified in Table 1.
3. Minimising the risk by engineering means. This could mean substituting with a less hazardous material, process or equipment. This could mean, for example, filling a silo through a ground-level filler pipe on the silo rather than using a truck-mounted auger or limiting the height of all mobile plant in order to maintain safety clearances from overhead power lines.
4. Introduce administrative controls. These include:
 - planning and documenting a safe system of work before starting work;
 - developing work procedures and travel routes for equipment and vehicles that ensure workers, their equipment and containers such as field bins, stock and tipper trucks do operate near or under live overhead power lines;
 - using another worker (to act as an observer) to ensure the work activity does not come closer than the approach distances specified in Table 1

- installing warning signs on gates to paddocks or on roadways where overhead power lines exist, (Refer to Figure 13 below);



Figure 13 – Overhead power lines warning sign

- having markers installed on overhead powerlines to make them easier to see and locate.
5. Use appropriate personal protective equipment. This includes the use of rubber soled boots, gloves and safety helmets when agricultural plant or equipment is being operated near overhead power lines.

A combination of the above control measures is required to be taken to minimise the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable if no single measure is sufficient for that purpose.

CHAPTER 8 – WORK NEAR LOW VOLTAGE OVERHEAD SERVICE LINES

8.1 Scope

In addition to the general requirements listed in Chapter 3, this chapter details any variations applicable where an ordinary person is required to carry out work near low voltage overhead service lines where the work involves:

- Minor building work such as painting; or
- Operation of motor vehicles (concrete trucks, furniture removal vans, etc); or
- Any other non-electrical work where there is a risk of contact with low voltage overhead service lines.

For the purposes of this code 'low voltage overhead service lines' covered by this chapter and illustrated in Figure 14 are:

- insulated low voltage aerial conductors and associated electrical apparatus that are connected from the point of supply (either the overhead power pole located on the street or the consumer's boundary) and terminated on the consumer's building, pole or structure at the point of attachment, or;
- insulated low voltage aerial consumers mains and associated electrical apparatus forming part of the consumer's electrical installation.

Note: For work involving cranes or mobile plant or work where any metal material is being handled (scaffolding, roofing materials and guttering) the risk control measures and increased approach distances described in other chapters of this code must be applied to the work.

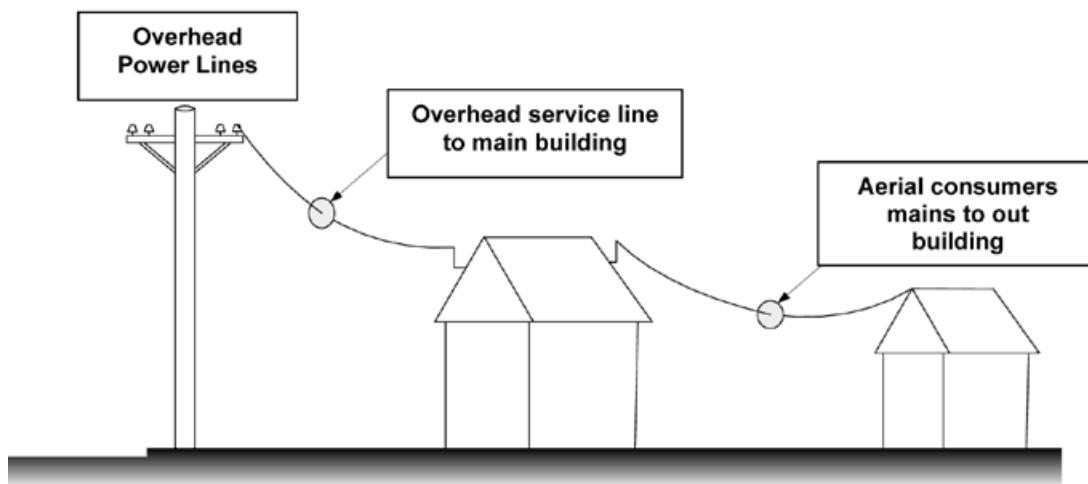


Figure 14 – Low Voltage Overhead Service Lines

8.2 Approach distances for work near low voltage overhead service lines

Table 4 provides approach distances for ordinary persons:

- performing minor building work near low voltage overhead service lines, (including hand tools held by a person); or
- operating cranes (and their loads) and items of mobile plant near low voltage overhead service lines; or
- handling metal materials near overhead service lines (such as scaffolding, roofing materials and guttering); or

- handling non-conductive materials near overhead service lines (such as timber, plywood, PVC pipes and guttering, etc); or
- driving or operating a vehicle under overhead service lines. **Note:** the approach distance specified in Table 4 is based on the fact that the design or transit envelope of the vehicle does not allow any part of the vehicle to come closer than the 0.6 metre approach distance specified.

TABLE 4

Approach distances for work near low voltage overhead service lines

Ordinary Persons (m)				
Hand held tools	Operation of crane or mobile plant	Handling of metal materials (Scaffolding, roofing, guttering, pipes, etc)	Handling of non-conductive materials (Timber, plywood, PVC pipes and guttering, etc)	Driving or operating vehicle
0.5	3.0	4.0	1.5	0.6

8.3 Work inside the relevant approach distances

If the work cannot be carried out without coming inside the relevant approach distance (ie closer than the approach distances listed in Table 4), prior to commencing work the employer or self-employed person must comply with the following requirements:

- identify the hazards,
- complete a written risk assessment for the proposed work,
- apply a safe system of work, and
- meet the requirements of the relevant network operator or in the case of overhead service lines forming part of the consumer's electrical installation, the controller of the premises.

8.4 Hazard identification

Before undertaking any work where the work might come closer than the specified approach distances an inspection of the worksite must be carried out and reasonable care taken to identify any potential hazards. Hazards associated with the low voltage overhead service lines may include:

- bare exposed live conductors;
- deteriorated or broken down insulation;
- damaged overhead service line mains connection box or damaged insulation around conductor clamps;
- deterioration of earthing of exposed conductive parts that are required to be earthed;
- voltage of the line is higher than the expected low voltage (240 / 415 volts a.c.); and
- possibility of hand held tools and equipment coming into contact with exposed live parts.

8.5 Risk assessment

If a hazard involving low voltage overhead service lines has been identified, a written risk assessment must be undertaken to determine the risk to persons encroaching within the specified approach distance for the work. This step will help determine the level of risk associated with the identified hazards and establish a priority list based on the level of risk.

The following factors may be relevant to the risk assessment:

- The type of work activities being undertaken, including how safe access and egress will be made to the work area;
- Tools or equipment being used, and the risk of mechanical damage to the low voltage overhead service lines if inadvertent contact is made with the conductors and electrical apparatus; Examples may include:
 - Handling a sheet of roofing material that inadvertently comes into contact with the service lines.
 - Use of cutting or grinding tools where the operator could lose control and come within the 0.5 metre approach distance.
- Proximity of the work to the low voltage overhead service lines;
- Environmental conditions, such as rain, wind or uneven terrain, which may bring a risk of unexpected movement of tools or equipment held by workers.

8.6 Control measures for work near low voltage overhead service lines

Once the hazards associated with work near low voltage overhead service lines have been identified and assessed then control measures must be implemented to eliminate the risk. If it is not practicable to do so, the risks associated with the hazard must then be controlled.

The use of specific control measures to eliminate or control identified risks should be done on the basis of the risk assessment. In particular, consider the following:

- Eliminating the hazard. This could involve de-energising the low voltage overhead service lines by arranging for the Network Operator or in the case of overhead service lines forming part of the consumer's electrical installation the controller of the premises to isolate the supply for the duration of the work or arranging for the re-routing of the low voltage overhead service lines away from the work area.
- Separating the hazard. If work has to be carried out in close proximity to the point of attachment and the power cannot be isolated, arrange for the Network Operator to fit insulated matting and 'tiger tails' at the point of attachment and over the overhead service lines before the work commences. Refer to Figure 15 below.

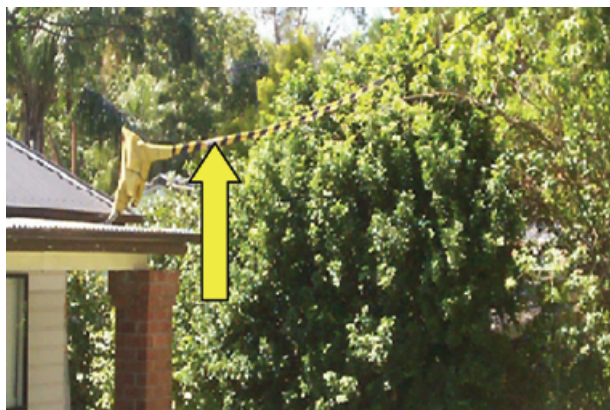


Figure 15 – Insulated matting and tiger tail fitted to overhead service line

- Minimising the risk by engineering means. This could mean substituting with a less hazardous material, process or equipment, for example, using an insulated fibreglass extension handle on a paint roller, instead of a conductive aluminium extension handle. Or carrying out sanding by hand near the point of attachment rather than using an electric disc sander.
- Introduce administrative controls such as planning and documenting the work procedures before starting work. Another administrative control could be using another worker (to act as an observer) to warn people before they encroach into the relevant approach distance.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment. This includes the use of electrically tested insulating gloves by anyone who may be at risk of encroaching into the relevant approach distance.

A combination of the above control measures is required to be taken to minimise the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable if no single measure is sufficient for that purpose.

CHAPTER 9 – ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WORK NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES

9.1 Tiger tails

Tiger tails may be used to provide a useful visual indication to crane, mobile plant operators and other persons working in the area of live overhead power lines, however, they do not protect people from the risk of electrocution or electric shock.



Figure 16 – Tiger tails fitted to overhead power lines

They are **not** to be regarded as effective insulation against contact by cranes or items of mobile plant and are not to be relied upon for mechanical protection. They should not be regarded as providing protection from electrical hazards. As such, the approach distances specified in this code are to be adhered to.

Tiger tails must only be fitted to overhead power lines by an electrically qualified person who is authorised by the network operator.

A competent person should visually inspect tiger tails at the worksite on a regular basis and prior to commencing crane, scaffolding or mobile plant operations. If the tiger tails have moved or been damaged the network operator must be contacted to ensure the tiger tails are replaced or located in the correct position.



WARNING

Tiger tails do not provide protection from electrical hazards and must only be fitted to the overhead power lines by an electrically qualified person who is authorised by the network operator.

9.2 Notification of incidents



The OHS Act and the OHS Regulation require employers to notify certain classes of workplace incidents.

Whether you are an employer, self-employed person and/or occupier you are required by law to notify incidents to WorkCover NSW and/or your workers compensation insurer as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the incident.

An occupier (of premises/workplaces) is someone who, manages or has responsibility for a workplace or a particular operation at a workplace, even though they may not be the employer.

Depending on the type of incident you may need to notify WorkCover and/or your workers compensation insurer. Some incidents classified as 'serious incidents' must be notified to WorkCover immediately. These 'serious incidents' include, but are not limited to the following;

- An incident where there has been a fatality,
- An incident where there has been a serious injury, and
- An incident where there is an immediate threat to life but result in no injury or illness.

In addition to the above, the OHS Act and OHS Regulation requires that certain occurrences that occur at the work place are not to be disturbed for 36 hours, (unless performing a rescue or permission has been given by WorkCover).

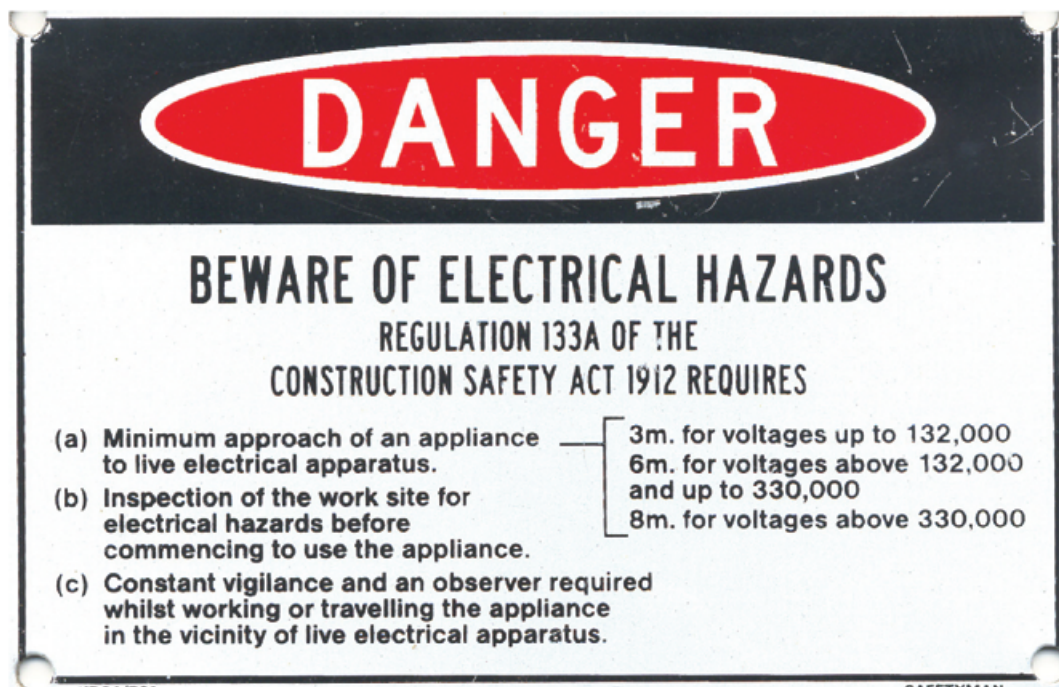
Working near overhead powerlines can be a high-risk activity and any contact with overhead power lines must be notified to WorkCover NSW and the relevant network operator in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.

Serious incidents can be notified to WorkCover on **13 10 50** as an urgent investigation may be needed.

For more information regarding your legal obligations to notify incidents please refer to the OHS Act and OHS Regulation.

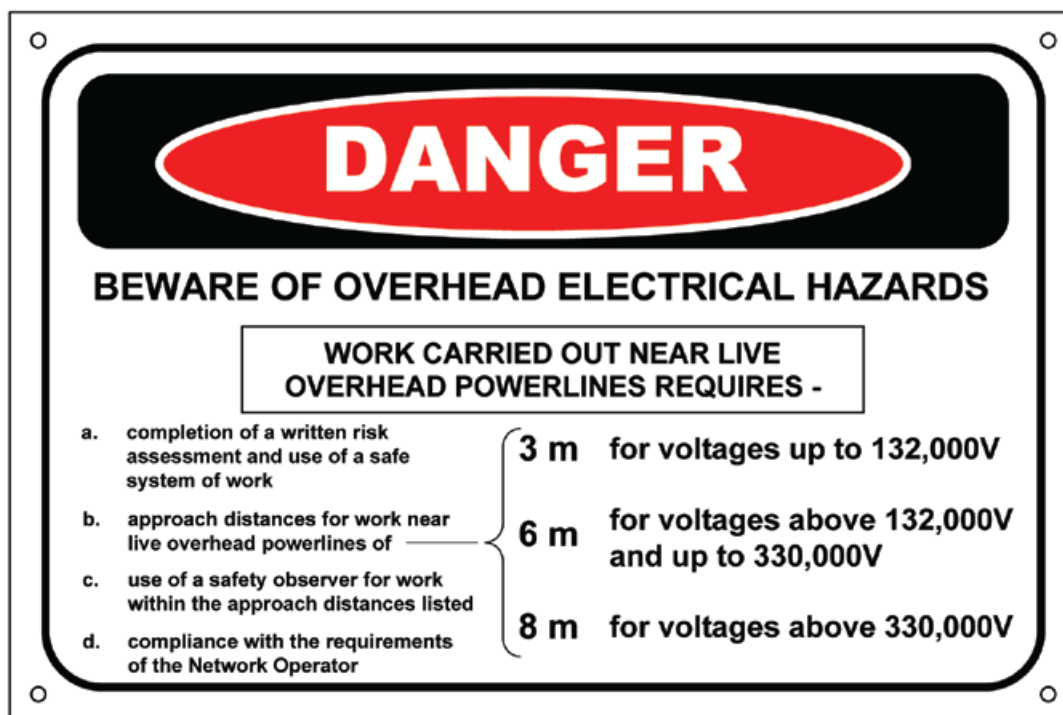
APPENDIX 1– WARNING NOTICE FOR OVERHEAD ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

(Dimensions 150 mm wide, 100 mm high, except if small plant item)



Notice that may remain fitted to cranes and mobile plant commissioned before 1 September 2001 (ie existing Notice as at the date of introduction of the OHS Regulation 2001)

Alternative Notice or Label for cranes and mobile plant commissioned after 1 September 2001



Cranes and mobile plant working near overhead power lines risk assessment checklist

Employer / Principal contractor:.....

Crane / Plant contractor:.....

Site Supervisor:.....

Network Operator:..... Contact phone:.....

This checklist is designed to help identify the hazards associated when operating cranes or mobile plant near overhead power lines that may encroach on the approach distances specified in Table 1 of this code. The checklist covers the main items described in Chapter 4 of this code. This checklist is not designed to cover all of the risks of working near overhead power lines and should be adapted as appropriate to meet the particular circumstances.

If you mark a NO box on the checklist, you need to take appropriate action to eliminate or control the hazard.

55

Section 2 – CONTROL MEASURES – OPERATING A CRANE OR ITEM OF MOBILE PLANT NEAR LIVE OVERHEAD POWER LINES	Yes	No
Have you completed a written risk assessment and identified all electrical hazards and non-electrical hazards, both actual and potential? All materials should be regarded as conductive unless you have definite knowledge to the contrary.		
Have you developed a safe system of work for the proposed work and determined the control measures required to eliminate or control the risks?		
Have you met the requirements of the network operator for the proposed work?		
Are workers trained, competent and confident in applying the particular procedures or techniques that are required for the task at hand?		
Do workers carrying out prescribed work tasks hold the relevant certificates of competency, eg crane operator, dogman, scaffolder, rigger, EWP operator?		
Have workers been authorised by the employer or person in control of the premises to work near live overhead power lines?		
Has a safe work method statement (SWMS) been completed for the task? Note: High-risk construction requires that an SWMS is completed for the work. Refer clause 209 of the OHS Regulation for further information.		
Is the work area clear of obstructions and is there a safe entry and exit?		
Are the necessary first aid and emergency facilities provided and accessible?		
Will an Accredited Safety Observer be present during the work task and assigned the duty of observing and warning against unsafe approach to overhead power lines?		
Additional control measures for the work:		
Section 3 – AFTER COMPLETING THE WORK	Yes	No
Have all workers been advised to treat the power lines as being live from this time?		
Has the network operator and all other relevant parties been advised that the work is completed?		
Additional measures following completion of work:		

_____ / _____ / _____
 Checklist Completed By Signature (Date)

APPENDIX 3 – EXAMPLE SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT

Safe Work Method Statement (Part 1)				Accepted: Yes / No
Employer / Contractor: Enter the name of the employer or contractor				Signed off: Enter the name of the person approving the SWMS
Project: Enter the name of project				Date:
Job Description: Enter the task to be undertaken				
Procedure (in steps):		Possible Hazards:	Safety Risks:	Control measures:
1. Write out the job step by step (Include all major phases of the work to be done)		Include all possible hazards. Some examples of hazards are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working near live overhead power lines Falls from heights Working near moving plant 	High, Medium or Low	List all safety controls such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access authority Safety Harness Mechanical Controls / PPE Safety Observer required
2.	Points to remember when writing out your work method statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write out the job procedure step by step Put the main idea first Start each step with an action word. For example Isolate, erect Use active, not passive voice. For example check approach distance, erect ground barriers Keep sentences short and clear Choose words carefully Keep it simple Get somebody who does not know the job to read the work method statement to check if they understand the job. 			
3.				
4.				
5.				
				Write all your work method statements after consulting the workers who are going to use them. You may then need to redraft them to include their suggestions. They may see a better and safer way of doing the job.
				Note: The possible hazards, safety risks and control measures are placed side by side. This will make it easier for you to consider the possible hazards for each step and decide on the appropriate controls to cover each hazard.

Safe Work Method Statement (Part 2)		Enter details of duties and responsibilities of Supervisors, Plant Operators and other employees. Enter such things as daily safety checks, weekly site inspections.	
Project:	Enter name of project here		
Personal Qualifications and Experience	Personnel, Duties and Responsibilities	Training required to complete proposed work	
Enter all the qualifications for everybody to undertake the tasks: WorkCover Certificates, Training Certificates, Network Operator Certificates, experience in doing the tasks that may not require certificates.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe electrical approach training 	
Engineering Details / Certificates / Approvals	Legislation / Codes of Practice / Standards	Detail here the training required by all personnel before the activity is commenced.	
Enter details of certification that may be required to undertake tasks. Engineers Certificates for major lifts, plant usage eg EWP's.			
Plant / Equipment	Maintenance Checks	Enter here all Legislation, Codes of Practice and Standards that is relevant to the work to be undertaken. Refer to the requirements when completing the safe work method statements.	
List all major items of Plant and Equipment that will be used during the duration of the task. Eg: Mobile Crane, EWP, Vehicle loading crane, etc.			
Read and signed by all employees on site:	Detail here the system in place to ensure plant and equipment is serviced and maintained. Enter details of tagging for lifting equipment.		

Safe Work Method Statement (Part 3) Read and signed by all employees on site:

Project: *Enter name of project here*

Job Description: *Enter the task to be undertaken*

Revision No.:

Name

Company	Revenue	Profit	Assets	Liabilities	Equity
Company A	100	20	120	80	40
Company B	150	30	180	120	60
Company C	200	40	240	160	80
Company D	250	50	300	200	100
Company E	300	60	360	240	120

Date Inducted

Signature

[illegible]

APPENDIX 4 – MODEL TRAINING COURSE GUIDELINES – SAFE ELECTRICAL APPROACH TRAINING

Introduction

This model training course framework provides information for registered training organisations (RTO's) wanting to develop a competency assessed training course for non electrical persons wanting to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills of an 'Accredited Person' as described in this code.

The suggested minimum structured learning time for new students is approximately 12 hours, which includes a 2 hour assessment. The subject areas listed should be considered as the minimum course requirements; RTO's may wish to add additional topics as appropriate.

Persons successfully completing the training course are to be awarded a statement of attainment or certificate from the RTO that indicates the person's name and an identifying number particular to the holder of the qualification. The name and contact details of the RTO should also be displayed on the statement of attainment or certificate.

Unit 1

Preparation to work safely near live overhead power lines as a non electrical worker Identification of the relevant legislative requirements including OHS Act 2000 and OHS Regulation 2001 including the Code of Practice – Work near overhead powerlines.

Ordinary and Accredited Persons.

Principles of electricity, 3 phase power system.

Electric shock and resuscitation.

Safe work practices and procedures.

Identification and confirmation of the approach distances for safe work and access near live overhead power lines and associated electrical apparatus.

Identification and implementation of safe systems of work including safe work method statements.

Hazard identification, risk assessment and control options prioritised.

Development of risk assessment documentation and safe work method statements.

Permit systems and established supporting procedural systems.

Responsibilities identified for the safety observer, crane and plant operator in accordance with requirements and established procedures /systems of work to ensure safety measures are followed in the event of an incident.

Reporting and notification procedures for work closer than the approach distances identified in the Code of Practice – Work near overhead powerlines.

Identification of electricity infrastructure for low voltage and high voltage overhead power lines.

Relevant approach distances as defined in the Code of Practice – Work near overhead powerlines.

Unit 2

Carry out the work safely near live overhead power lines as a non electrical worker

Application of OHS principles and practices to reduce risk of incidents with overhead powerlines.

Process for monitoring and reporting hazards and OHS risks to immediate authorised personnel for directions according to established procedures.

Non routine events.

Emergency procedures in the event of and responding to an incident.

Working safely in accordance with instructions and established routines/procedures.

Unit 3

Complete the work safely near overhead power lines as non electrical worker

Work schedules, requirements for returning work permit(s) and/or access authorisation permits.

Process for reporting to authorised personnel incidents in accordance with established procedures.

Work completion records, reports/data sheets for completed works.

Qualification and experience of the trainer:

Persons presenting the above training course should have relevant industry experience associated with the NSW Electricity Supply Industry and have as a minimum a 'Workplace Trainer and Assessor Certificate 1V' and be conversant with all the relevant NSW Acts, Regulations, Codes and Industry Guides associated with work near live overhead power lines.

Overview of assessment:

Registered training organisations should ensure that assessment of the above training course be carried out in accordance with accepted industry and regulatory practice. Evidence for competence should be considered holistically and cover the essential knowledge and associated skills for work that is to be carried out safely near live overhead power lines by a non-electrical worker.

Trainees should be assessed across a representative range of contexts from the Units listed in the model training course including,

- Preparation to work safely near live overhead power lines
- Carry out the work safely near live overhead power lines
- Complete the work safely near live overhead power lines.

Further information on training and assessment for work that is to be carried out safely near live overhead power lines by a non-electrical worker can be found in the Australian National Training Authority document UETTDRELO4A – Working safely near live electrical apparatus as a non electrical worker.

APPENDIX 5 – EMERGENCY PROCEDURE FOLLOWING CONTACT WITH LIVE OVERHEAD POWER LINES

Should contact be made with a live overhead power line or a flash-over occurs between a live overhead power line and a crane or an item of mobile plant, the following actions shall be taken:

- An attempt should be made to break the machinery's contact with the live overhead power line by moving the jib or driving the machine clear.
- If it is not possible to break the contact with the live overhead power line, the operator of the crane or mobile plant should remain inside the cabin of the crane or on the plant item. The network operator should be called immediately to isolate power to the live overhead power line. The operator must remain in place until the power has been isolated, and the 'all clear' given by the network operator.

WARNING



When a crane or item of plant inadvertently contacts overhead power lines circuit protective devices may operate to automatically turn the power off. However some protection devices are designed to automatically reclose thereby re-energising the powerlines after a short period of time, typically 1 – 4 seconds.

- If it is essential to leave the cabin or the operator's position due to fire or other life threatening reason, then jump clear of the equipment. Do not touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. When moving away from the equipment, the operator should hop or shuffle away from the plant item (with both feet together) until at least eight metres from the nearest part of the crane or plant. Under no circumstances run or walk from the crane or item of plant as voltage gradients passing through the ground may cause electricity to pass through the body resulting in an electric shock.
- Warn all other personnel and members of the public to keep 8 metres clear from the crane or item of plant. Do not touch or allow persons to touch any part of the crane or plant item and do not allow persons to approach or re-enter the vehicle until the network operator has determined the site safe. Remember electricity flows through the ground, so an electric shock could be received from walking close to the scene. If the crane or plant operator is immobilised, ensure the power supply has been isolated and the site made safe before giving assistance.
- Untrained, unequipped persons should not attempt to rescue a person receiving an electric shock. All too often secondary deaths occur because others get electrocuted trying to help earlier victims. If the crane or plant operator is immobilised, ensure the power supply has been isolated and the site has been made safe before giving assistance.

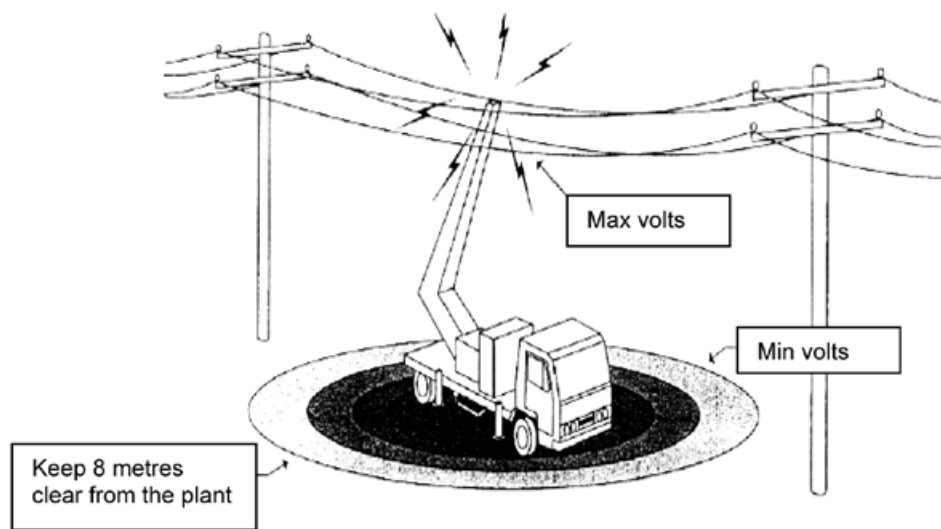


Figure 17: Affected area surrounding mobile plant when in contact with a live overhead power line

Post – incident inspection by a competent person

When a crane or item of mobile plant has been in contact with a live overhead power line, it should be checked by a competent person for any damage to the components of the crane or mobile plant. Any actions recommended by the competent person are to be completed before the crane or mobile plant is returned to service.

Tyres on cranes and mobile plant that have been in contact with overhead power lines where electrical flash-over and current flow occurs through the rubber tyres should be considered as a potential hazard. These rubber tyres may catch fire, with the obvious potential for them to explode. Additionally, a lesser known danger may occur, which results when combustion takes place within the tyre, with no apparent external signs. When excessive heat is developed in or applied to a tyre as in the case from contact with overhead power lines, it can initiate a process known as pyrolysis, which is the decomposition of a substance by heat. This can generate a build up of flammable gases and pressure within the tyre, which may ultimately rupture or explode.

Vast amounts of energy can be released by a tyre explosion, often leading to significant equipment damage, serious injuries or fatalities. Pyrolysis related explosions are very unpredictable, and have been known to occur immediately or up to 24 hours after initiation. An explosion can occur where no fire is visible and the danger area can be up to 300 metres from the tyre.

Any rubber tyred crane or plant item involved in an incident where contact is made with overhead power lines which results in discharges or flash-over of electrical current through the tyres should be considered as a potential hazard. If any personnel suspect there is a danger of a tyre explosion, as in the case of the mobile crane contacting overhead power lines, then the procedure should include:

- parking the crane in an isolation zone, with a minimum 300 metre radius,
- removing all personnel from the area, and not allowing access to isolation zone for 24 hours, and
- alerting fire fighting services

APPENDIX 6 – CASE STUDIES OF OVERHEAD POWER LINE INCIDENTS

CASE 1

Incident – Mobile Crane Operation

A mobile crane came into contact with 132,000 volt overhead power lines that were located adjacent to a worksite. At the time of the incident the crane driver had slewed the boom of the crane towards the overhead power lines, which resulted in the lifting chains swinging outwards, making contact with the power line.

Luckily no persons were injured, however the crane sustained extensive damage to the tyres, lifting rope and electrical system on the crane.

Contributing factors and relevant sections

Failure to:

- maintain relevant approach distance to the power lines and take outcome of the possibility of the lifting chains swinging towards the overhead power lines when the crane was operated. – Section 3.3
- carry out an adequate risk assessment of the worksite – Section 4.3
- implement appropriate control measures for the work – Section 4.4
- use a safety observer to observe the crane operations near the power lines – Section 4.7

CASE 2

Incident – Scaffolding Work

A worker died and three apprentice roof plumbers were injured when attempting to move an 8.9 metre high aluminium scaffold at a construction site. At the time of the incident the workers were moving the mobile scaffold over soft sand when the castor wheels located at the base of the scaffold sunk into the sand causing it to fall and make contact with 33,000 volt overhead power lines that were located adjacent to the construction site.

As a result of this incident the construction firm and roofing contractor were fined a total of \$224,000 by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission.

Contributing factors and relevant sections

Failure to:

- carry out an adequate risk assessment of the worksite that took account of the ground conditions at the worksite – Section 4.3
- implement appropriate control measures for the work – Section 4.4.

CASE 3

Incident – Work on a rural property

The victim, a 17 year old rural worker, received a fatal electric shock due to a flashover when a steel flagpole came into close proximity with an 11kV overhead power line that was located above the entrance to a rural property. At the time of the incident the worker was attempting to erect the 5.2m flag pole at the main entrance gate to the property.

Contributing factors and relevant sections

Failure to

- identify the hazard of the overhead power lines – Section 7.2
- carry out a risk assessment of the worksite and implement appropriate risk controls – Sections 7.3 and 7.4.

CASE 4

Incident – Tipper truck operation

A tipper truck contacted an 11,000 volt overhead power line causing it to break and fall to the ground striking a worker who was at the worksite. At the time of the incident the tip truck was delivering a load of granulated bitumen to the worksite when the tip tray of the truck was raised upwards into the overhead power lines.

As a result of this incident the NSW Chief Industrial Magistrates Court fined the construction firm a total of \$15,000.

Contributing factors and relevant sections

Failure to:

- plan the work and identify the hazard of the overhead power lines – Section 2.5 and 4.2
- maintain the relevant approach distance to the overhead power lines and take account of the height of the raised tray when the load was dumped at the worksite. Sections 3.3
- carry out a risk assessment of the worksite – Sections 3.7 and 4.3
- implement appropriate control measures for the work – Section 4.4
- use a safety observer to observe the truck operations near the power lines – Section 4.7.

APPENDIX 7 – USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

WORKCOVER NSW APPROVED INDUSTRY CODES OF PRACTICE

- *Code of Practice: Occupational Health and Safety Consultation*
- *Code of Practice: Risk assessment*
- *Code of Practice: Occupational Health and Safety induction training for construction work*
- *Code of Practice: Moving plant on Construction Sites*
- *Code of Practice: Amenity Tree Industry*
- *Code of practice: Technical Guidance*

Note: The Australian Standards listed below are also WorkCover approved industry codes of practice.

WORKCOVER GUIDES

- *Identification Tool for Electrical Hazards on-site*
- *Subby Pack – OHS contractor management tool*
- *Dangers of Power Lines when Pumping Concrete*
- *WorkCover Safety Alert – Tiger Tails*

Standards and Codes offer practical guidance on health and safety for work. However, these are subject to change from time to time. For further information contact the WorkCover Assistance Service on: **13 10 50**.

For information about the wide range of other codes of practice, certification guides and publications on OHS, rehabilitation and workers compensation, contact the Publications Order line: 1300 797 003.

Information on the latest laws can be checked at www.legislation.nsw.gov.au or contact (02) 9238 0950 or 1800 463 955 (NSW country only).

AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS

Australian Standards can be purchased from SAI Global by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 131 242 or over the net at <http://www.saiglobal.com/shop>

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| AS 2550.1 | Crane, hoist and winches – Safe use Part 1: General requirements |
| AS 2550.1 | Crane, hoist and winches – Safe use Part 5: Mobile and vehicle loading cranes |
| AS/NZS 4576 | Guidelines for Scaffolding |

NATIONAL ELECTRICITY NETWORK SAFETY GUIDELINES

National Guidelines can be purchased from the Electricity Supply Association of Australia by phoning 03 9670 0188 or over the net at <http://www.esaa.com.au>

- NENS 04-2003 *National guidelines for safe approach distances to electrical apparatus*

NETWORK OPERATORS – CONTACT NUMBERS

- Energy Australia: 13 15 25
- Integral Energy: 13 10 81
- Country Energy: 13 23 56
- Rail Corp: (02) 9379 4911
- Transgrid is divided into three regional areas:
 - Central Region – 1800 625 108
 - Northern Region – 1800 998 049
 - Southern Region – 1800 654 195.

Catalogue No. **WC01394** WorkCover Publications Hotline **1300 799 003**



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WORK NEAR UNDERGROUND ASSETS

GUIDE 2007

making a difference



New South Wales Government



This is a Utilities Industry Reference Group (IRG) project in partnership with WorkCover and Industry.

The Utilities IRG working party consisted of representatives from the following organisations:

- Alinta
- Australian Workers Union – Technical Administrative Professional Staff Branch
- Civil Contractors Federation
- Department Energy, Utilities and Sustainability
- EnergyAustralia
- Integral Energy
- Local Government Engineer's Association
- Local Government and Shires Association
- Roads and Traffic Authority
- Sydney Water
- Telstra
- WorkCover.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Working Party wishes to acknowledge that some references in this document are sourced from the WorkSafe Victoria *Guide for Undertaking Work Near Underground Assets*, the Utility Providers *Code of Practice for Western Australia* and the NSW Streets Opening Conference *Guide to Codes and Practices for Streets Opening*.

Disclaimer

This publication may contain occupational health and safety and workers compensation information. It may include some of your obligations under the various legislations that WorkCover NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate legislation.

Information on the latest laws can be checked by visiting the NSW legislation website (www.legislation.nsw.gov.au) or by contacting the free hotline service on 02 9321 3333.

This publication does not represent a comprehensive statement of the law as it applies to particular problems or to individuals or as a substitute for legal advice. You should seek independent legal advice if you need assistance on the application of the law to your situation.

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PREFACE

This Guideline is for employers, employees, contractors, subcontractors and other parties involved in construction work near underground assets. Note: This Guideline is not designed to impact on mining legislation.

The aim of this Guideline is to assist employers in deciding appropriate measures to eliminate or control risks to workers and other people on construction sites. It provides practical advice on implementing the requirements of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* (OHS Act) and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001* (OHS Regulation).

At times, construction work may be carried out near underground assets on greenfield construction sites as well as on or near public roads and pedestrians. Where construction and maintenance work is carried out on or near public roads, work should be carried out in accordance with the AS 1742 set of Standards – *Manual of uniform traffic control devices*. These Standards are supported by a set of field guides (HB 81) *Field guide for traffic control at works on roads*.

Use this Guideline to assess the effectiveness of your present arrangements for dealing with safety issues associated with working near underground assets, and to check that sources of risk have been identified and dealt with. If you are setting up a new business, this Guideline can serve as your step-by-step guide to establishing a program to manage the hazards arising from work near underground assets.

Work on, near or adjacent to gas and electricity services are deemed to be high risk construction work. Also water and sewerage assets may be deemed to be high risk construction work.

What do the symbols in the Guideline mean?

To help you work out what you require, a number of symbols are used to highlight things you need to take into account and tools to help you undertake the activity.



Assess the risks in your workplace



Processes of finding things that cause harm, work out how serious the problems are and then to fix them



Legal obligations that must be followed



The process of finding things that cause harm, working out how big a problem they are and fixing them

1. ESTABLISHMENT

1.1 TITLE

This is the Work Near Underground Assets Guideline.

1.2 PURPOSE

This Guideline provides practical guidance to prevent injury to people and damage to underground assets.

1.3 SCOPE

This Guideline informs asset owners, contractors, employers, workers and industry as to their obligations to:

- accurately install and record the location of the asset
- operate and maintain utility assets
- foster co-operation between underground utility owners and industry so as to eliminate or control the risk to individuals and the community, as well as damage to underground assets
- manage the risks involving underground assets at a workplace
- provide safe systems of work for individuals dealing with works near underground assets
- encourage the use of agreed practices for such work
- carry out JSA/Risk assessment and develop safe work method statements prior to commencing high risk construction work.

Note: This Guideline relates to underground utility assets on public land, within easements and on private property. While the principles may be similar, this Guideline does not specifically relate to underground assets on private property.

1.3.1 Encouraging compliance

All worksite controllers within NSW have a duty of care to persons within their worksite or those who may be affected by actions or omissions arising from their work activities.

The adoption of this Guideline when dealing with underground assets should help ensure that this duty of care is met.

All persons working near underground assets are encouraged to adopt this Guideline.

All asset owners must promote and encourage the adoption of this Guideline, not only within their own workplaces but to sub-contractors and all persons performing work near underground assets.

1.4 COMMENCEMENT

This Guideline takes effect on 05/07.

1.5 INTERPRETATION

1.5.1 Recommended practices

Words such as 'should' indicate recommended courses of action. 'Consider' indicates a possible course of action that the Guideline is indicating the duty holder should think about. However, you may choose an alternative method of achieving a safe system of work.

1.5.2 Legal requirements

Words such as 'must', 'requires' or 'mandatory' indicate that legal requirements exist which must be complied with.

1.6 DEFINITIONS

access authority	a written authorisation, issued by an asset owner, which allows persons to work within a specified proximity of the asset.
accredited person	a person who has successfully completed a recognised training course relating to the specific job, the training having been conducted by a registered or accredited training organisation.
approach distance	the minimum separation in air from an exposed conductor that shall be maintained by a person, or any object held by or in contact with that person.
approved	having appropriate endorsement in writing for a specific activity.
asset owner	the owner, controller or operator of an underground asset. For the purpose of this Guideline an underground asset includes electrical, water, sewage and drainage, gas, telecommunications, petrochemicals and hazardous substances.
authorised person	a person with technical knowledge or sufficient experience who has been approved, or has the delegated authority to act on behalf of the organisation, to perform the duty concerned.
cable	an insulated conductor or two or more such conductors laid together, whether with or without fillings, reinforcements or protective coverings.
competent person	a person who has acquired through training, qualification or experience, or a combination of them, the knowledge and skills to carry out the task.
confined space	confined space as defined in Australian Standard AS 2865 <i>Safe working in a confined space</i> .
construction work	means any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• excavation, including the excavation or filling of trenches, ditches, shafts, wells, tunnels and pier holes, and the use of caissons and cofferdams• building, construction (including the manufacturing of prefabricated elements of a building at the place of work concerned), alteration, renovation, repair, maintenance and demolition of all types of buildings• civil engineering, including the construction, structural alteration, repair, maintenance and demolition of – for example, airports, docks, harbours, inland waterways, dams, rivers, avalanche and sea defence works, roads and highways, railways, bridges and tunnels, viaducts – and works related to the provision of services such as communications, drainage, sewerage, water and energy supplies.

consumer services	the supply to individual houses or premises, as opposed to “mains” which form part of the utility’s distribution system.
– <i>water</i>	the cold water supply pipework from the water main up to and including the outlet valves at fixtures and appliances. The water service is owned by the consumer.
– <i>electricity</i>	consumer services means the conductors from the supply authorities’ distribution mains (overhead or underground) to the customers’ premises.
– <i>gas</i>	the pipe used to supply gas to the property, which runs from the distribution main to the meter position. the Network Operator, also known as the Asset Owner, owns the section of the pipe between the distribution main and the property. The property owner owns the section of pipe between the property line and the meter.
– <i>telecommunications</i>	the conduit and cabling controlled by the Carrier from the Network Point of Presence to the Network Boundary Point (NBP). Cabling beyond the NBP is customer owned cabling.
contaminated ground	a contaminated site that poses a significant risk of harm to human health or the environment and is regulated by the EPA (NSW) under <i>Contaminated Land Management Act 1997</i> . Refer to http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/clm/searchregister.aspx
control measures	measures taken to minimise a risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.
crane	an appliance intended for raising or lowering a load and moving it horizontally. Includes the supporting structure of the crane and its foundations, but does not include industrial lift trucks, earth moving machinery, amusement devices, tractors, industrial robots, conveyors, building maintenance equipment, suspended scaffolds or lifts.
earthed	direct electrical connection to the general mass of earth so as to ensure and maintain the effective dissipation of electrical energy.
earth moving machinery	an operator controlled item of plant used to excavate, load or transport, compact or spread earth, overburden, rubble, spoil, aggregate or similar material, but does not include a tractor or industrial lift truck.
electrical apparatus	any electrical equipment, including overhead power lines and underground cables, the conductors of which are live or can be made live.
electricity network	transmission and distribution systems consisting of electrical apparatus which are used to convey or control the conveyance of electricity between generators’ points of connection and customers’ points of connection.
emergency work	work to rectify or prevent imminent danger to human life or physical injury. work to rectify or prevent imminent or continuing damage to, or destruction of, property or the environment. work to rectify or prevent an unscheduled outage which has or is likely to have a significant impact on the Distribution Network or the Carrier’s network.
employee	an individual who works under a contract of employment or apprenticeship.
employer	a person who employs persons under contracts of employment or apprenticeship.
energised	connected to any source of energy.

excavating	the movement or placement of soil or other surface materials by removing, boring or forcing objects into the ground or surface of the earth.
exposed conductor	an electrical conductor, approach to which is not prevented by a barrier of rigid material or by insulation that is adequate under a relevant Australian Standard specification for the voltage concerned.
extra high voltage (EHV)	in NSW, means a transmission system cable with a nominal voltage of 132,000V a.c. (132kV) or above.
hazard	anything (including work practices and procedures) that has the potential to harm the health and safety of a person.
high pressure gas (HP)	210kPa – 1050kPa. Note: Transmission Pressure gas is equal to or greater than 1050kPa.
high-risk construction work	means any of the following construction work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involving structural alterations that require temporary support • at a height above 3 metres • involving excavation to a depth greater than 1.5 metres • demolition work for which a licence is not required • in tunnels • involving the use of explosives • near traffic or mobile plant • in or around gas or electrical installations • over or adjacent to water where there is a risk of drowning.
high voltage (HV)	a nominal voltage exceeding 1000V a.c. or exceeding 1500V d.c.
insulated	separated from adjoining conducting material by a non-conducting substance which provides resistance to the passage of current, or to disruptive discharges through or over the surface of the substance at the operating voltage, and to mitigate the danger of shock or injurious leakage of current.
instructed person	a person adequately advised or supervised by an Authorised Person to enable them to avoid the dangers which electricity may create.
isolated	disconnected from all possible sources of energy by means that prevent unintentional energisation of the apparatus.
lancing	using water or air aided by vacuum extraction to achieve non-destructive excavation.
live	energised.
low pressure gas (LP)	pressure less than or equal to 7kPa.
low voltage (LV)	a nominal voltage exceeding 50V a.c. or 120V d.c. but not exceeding 1000V a.c. or 1500V d.c.
mains	part of the utility's distribution system as opposed to "services" which are the take-offs for individual properties.
– <i>water/sewerage</i>	a conduit or pipeline controlled and maintained by a network utility operator or water authority.
– <i>electricity</i>	aerial or underground wires or cables from 400/230V to 330kV a.c
– <i>gas</i>	a pipe installed in a street to convey gas to individual services.
– <i>telecommunications</i>	any facility owned by the carrier – typical underground plant consists of conduits, cables, pits and manholes linking exchanges, or exchanges to distribution points.

medium pressure gas (MP)	pressures greater than 7kPa and up to 210kPa.
mobile plant	<p>includes plant that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moves either under its own power or is pulled or pushed by other mobile plant • moves on or around the worksite, enters or leaves the site, or moves past the site • includes road vehicles operating at a worksite. <p>Note: This definition has been adopted for the purposes of this Guideline. This includes items such as earthmoving machinery, concrete boom pumps and tipper trucks operating at a worksite.</p>
network operator	also known as the asset owner.
nominal voltage (U)	the a.c. or d.c. voltage by which a system of supply is designated.
OHS act	the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000.
OHS regulation	the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001.
overhead power line	any bare or covered aerial conductors and other associated electrical parts that make up an aerial line for the distribution and transmission of electrical energy.
other cable systems	telecommunications cables, optic fibre cables, control cables, earth cables or electrolysis drainage cables.
personal protective equipment (PPE)	<p>items that workers can use to protect themselves against hazards. PPE includes insulating gloves, mats or sheeting, glasses and face protection.</p> <p>Note: A number of items of PPE are made and tested to Australian Standards.</p> <p>PPE that is not designated as meeting a recognised Standard may be unreliable in service, as its performance is unknown.</p>
place of work	premises where people work.
plant	<p>any machinery, equipment or appliance.</p> <p>Note: For the purposes of this Guideline the definition includes a broad range of machinery and equipment, but not limited to, cranes, mobile plant, scaffolding, load shifting equipment, industrial lift trucks, earth moving machinery, amusement devices, tractors, rural machinery, vehicles, conveyors, building maintenance equipment, suspended scaffolds or lifts, implements or tools and any component or fitting of those things.</p>
polymeric	made from polymers otherwise known as plastics.
pot-holing	excavating with hand tools to a pre-determined depth to establish if assets exist in the immediate location.
premises	<p>includes any place, and particularly includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any land, building or part of a building • any vehicle, vessel or aircraft • any installation on land, on the bed of any waters or floating on any waters • any tent or movable structure.
permit conditions	permission conditions stipulated by asset owner.
pressurised	a constrained flow of a substance in a pipeline which may be of varying diameters and thicknesses, the flow of which may or may not be directly controlled by an asset owner.
procedure	the documentation of a systematic series of actions (or activities) directed to achieve a desired result.

property line	the boundary line between the road reserve and the adjacent property.
railway assets	electrical, signalling and communications infrastructure owned and maintained by the rail entity. Assets also included but are not limited to, drainage lines and compressed air line.
safety observer	a competent person who has been specifically assigned the duty of observing and warning against unsafe approach to the asset.
supervisor	a representative of the principal for a worksite, who has the delegated responsibility for a task or range of tasks being undertaken at the worksite.
underground assets	part of an underground network such as water/drainage/sewerage, electricity, gas or communications etc.
underground services	the supply to individual houses or premises as opposed to underground assets which form part of the utility's distribution system.
works planned or programmed	any work which has followed the normal planning process prior to work commencing ie where the worksite has been physically inspected and assessed in advance of the work crew arriving on site.

2. PLANNING AND PREPARATION



The OHS Act and the OHS Regulation require employers to address workplace health and safety through a process of risk management and consultation.

Under the OHS Act and the OHS Regulation, employers have an obligation to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees at work and that other people are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. When contracting out work, employers must ensure that contractors are planning and carrying out work in a safe manner. The work should be conducted according to this Guideline.

To effectively implement this Guideline, employers need to be aware of these requirements and have procedures in place to apply them. Employees, self-employed persons, subcontractors and controllers of premises, plant and substances also have responsibilities under OHS legislation. Each individual should ensure that they work safely and that their work does not expose others to health and safety risks.

The way to systematically plan and manage health and safety in the workplace is to build risk management and consultation into all those activities that may have OHS implications. This will involve activities such as purchasing, work methods or procedures, using contractors, reporting OHS problems, investigating incidents and planning emergency procedures.

2.1 UNDERSTANDING RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1.1 Clients

The client's responsibilities under the OHS Act and OHS Regulation will depend on their role in the design and construction. They are usually a "controller of premises" at least to some extent and may also have other roles such as designer, principal contractor or an employer in relation to the project.

The client is also in the best position to influence others to consider that constructability and maintainability are included in the design and thus to reduce construction and ongoing maintenance risks at the design stage. Setting realistic timeframes for tendering, planning and project execution can also assist planning and execution of construction work.

However, the client is not always aware of all the complexities, such as the range of construction techniques, ground conditions and their effect on safety. It is therefore often appropriate for consultation between the client and other parties at an early stage to take advantage of the opportunity to identify the best concept design.

2.1.2 Controllers of work premises, plant or substances



Controllers of work premises, plant or substances also have health and safety legal responsibilities. They must make sure that the premises used as a place of work are safe and without risks to health and that the plant and substances used in the work process are safe and without risks to health when properly used. For persons who have only limited control of the premises, plant or substances, their responsibilities apply only to the matters over which they have control.

Designers should ensure that:

- to the extent that they have control over the design work, the structure (or plant) can be safely constructed, used, repaired, cleaned, maintained, and demolished, such that the health and safety of any person is not put at risk by the design
- information is provided to the client about the health and safety aspects of the design.

Designers should also ensure that, as far as practicable, hazards associated with the following are identified before commencement of the construction work:

- the design of the structure (whether permanent or temporary)
- systems of work required to construct, repair and maintain the structure
- the intended use of the structure
- materials required to be used in the construction of the structure
- the demolition (or abandonment) of the structure.

Note: In relation to the design of plant, the OHS Regulation contains more detailed risk control requirements on designers, manufacturers and suppliers.

Where there is more than one designer, critical aspects of the project should be documented and liaison should occur between the principal contractor and relevant designers so that the work can be coordinated to ensure the safe interaction of the different design aspects. When risks remain in the design work, information should be included with the design to alert others to the risks.

2.1.3 Principal contractors



The principal contractor, whether as an employer or as the person in control of the workplace, must provide and maintain in relation to those matters over which he or she has control, a workplace that is safe and without risks to health for their employees and other persons present at the workplace or affected by the work. To fulfil these obligations the principal contractor must plan for the work to be done safely.

The principal contractor must ensure that a site specific OHS management plan is prepared and documented for each place of work where construction work is to be carried out, before the work commences. This plan must be developed in consultation with the contractor/s and their employees or representatives. The plan must include safe work method statements (SWMS), provided by the contractors where they are used, for all work activities assessed as having risks. It must also include the following details:

- arrangements for OHS induction training
- arrangements for managing OHS incidents including response persons
- site safety rules and arrangements for informing persons affected
- details where persons have specific site OHS responsibilities.

The health and safety management plan must be monitored to ensure that work is carried out safely, according to that plan and that the plan is effective. The plan must be maintained and up to date during the course of the construction work and must be made available for inspection. The principal contractor must stop work immediately, or as soon as it is safe to do so, where there is a risk to the health or safety of a person.

2.1.4 Contractors



The contractor(s) doing the work, whether the principal contractor themselves or sub-contractors, must provide and maintain a workplace that is safe and without risks to health for their employees in relation to those matters over which they have control.

In addition to consultation with the principal contractor in the overall job planning, the contractor must develop written SWMS including an assessment of the risks and the controls used to carry out the work safely.

2.1.5 Employees



Employees must take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others. Employees must cooperate with employers in their efforts to comply with OHS requirements. This means that employees must notify their employer of safety and security hazards, risks and incidents in line with the requirements of the OHS Act. These requirements should be outlined by the employer's OHS policy, procedures and safety related instructions.

Employees must not be required to pay for anything done or provided to meet specific requirements made under the OHS Act or OHS Regulation.

2.1.6 Self-employed persons



Self-employed persons must ensure that their undertakings do not expose others to health or safety risks.

2.2 COORDINATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

There may be a number of parties involved in a project, such as:

- the client
- the principal contractor
- controllers of premises, plant or substances
- designers
- employers (contractor or subcontractors) who employ persons at the site, including labour hire agencies providing persons to the site
- self-employed persons
- suppliers of plant, materials or prefabricated components.



Where more than one party has responsibilities at a specific workplace, each party retains their legal responsibilities and must discharge their responsibilities in a coordinated manner.

3. CONSULTATION AND RISK MANAGEMENT



The OHS Act and the OHS Regulation require employers to address workplace health and safety through a process of risk management and consultation.

To effectively implement this Guideline, employers need to be aware of these requirements and have procedures in place to apply them.

Employers are advised to consult the OHS Act and the OHS Regulation as well as the *Code of Practice: Occupational Health and Safety Consultation* and the *Code of Practice: Risk Assessment* for details of these requirements and how they can be met. The following information is designed to provide an overview of legislative requirements.

3.1 CONSULTATION AT THE WORKPLACE



Employers must consult with employees when taking steps to assess and control workplace risks.

In order to consult with employees, employers are required to set up consultation arrangements and develop consultation procedures.

3.1.1 Consultation arrangements

The OHS Act provides three options for consultation arrangements:

Arrangement	Workplace	Requirement
OHS Committee	20 or more employees	requested by a majority of employees or direction by WorkCover
OHS Representative	any size	at least one employee requests an election or directed by WorkCover
Other agreed arrangements	any size	agreed to by both the employer and employees (in a small workplace it may be a regular safety meeting with employees)

Before using this Guideline, an employer should ensure that consultation arrangements are in place. An employer may initiate the establishment of an OHS Committee or the election of an OHS Representative if the employees have not made such a request. When the consultation arrangements have been decided, clause 27 of the OHS Regulation requires employers to record them and advise all existing and new employees.

3.1.2 Consultation procedures

After setting up the consultation arrangements employers need to consider when and how these consultation arrangements need to be applied.

3.1.3 When should consultation be undertaken?

Under section 13 of the OHS Act, employers have the general duty to consult employees when decisions are being considered that may affect their employees' health and safety. Therefore, employers are required to consult with their OHS Committee, OHS Representative or other agreed arrangement when such decisions are being considered. Decisions which could affect health and safety include:

- planning for new premises or modifying existing premises
- purchasing new plant, equipment or substances
- planning, designing or changing work tasks or jobs
- using contractors in the workplace
- investigating incidents or accidents
- developing emergency procedures
- determining or reviewing workplace amenities
- determining or reviewing consultation arrangements.

Note: Any procedures that are developed to encompass these activities should incorporate consultation.

It may not be practical or reasonable to involve the OHS Committee or the OHS Representative in every purchase decision or task change. However, the employers and committee or representative should agree on what process is needed to ensure that affected employees are consulted.

3.1.4 How should consultation be undertaken?

When engaged in consultation, the OHS Act requires employers to:

- **share all relevant information with employees.** For example, if an employer is going to change a work task, employees need to be told of any risk to health and safety that may arise and what will be done to eliminate or control these risks.
- **give employees reasonable time to express their views.** Employees need adequate time to assess the information given to them, obtain relevant safety information and consult with fellow employees to enable them to form their views.
- **value the views of employees and take them into account when the decision is made to resolve the matter.** In many cases, agreement will be reached on how the safety issues are to be addressed. When agreement cannot be reached, the employer should explain how the employees' concerns have been addressed.

3.2 RISK MANAGEMENT AT THE WORKPLACE



Employers and self-employed persons must identify any foreseeable hazards, assess their risks and take action to eliminate or control them.

When addressing health and safety issues, besides consulting employees, employers must adopt the process of risk management. This process requires employers to:

3.2.1 Identify hazards

To ensure a safe and healthy workplace, employers must identify all the foreseeable health and safety hazards, which could harm their employees or other persons in the workplace. Hazards may arise from the work process, the equipment and materials in use, the work environment, or other people involved.

3.2.2 Assess risks

Once hazards have been identified the risk they pose to health and safety needs to be assessed. Some hazards pose a greater risk than others do, and the frequency and duration of exposure can also affect the risk. Risk assessment involves considering the likelihood and severity of injury or illness being caused by exposure to the risk. Therefore the factors that need to be considered in a risk assessment should include the:

- harm that can be caused by exposure to the hazard
- number of people and the duration and frequency of exposure to the hazard
- capability, skill and experience of people exposed to the hazard.

The risk assessment process provides information on the factors which contribute to the risk. This information will assist in determining what needs to be done to eliminate or control the hazard.

3.2.3 Eliminate or control the risk

The first responsibility is to investigate how the risk can be eliminated. Before implementing the control measures described in this Guideline, an employer should investigate possible strategies for eliminating the hazard from the work system.

If it is not reasonably practicable to do so, the risks associated with the hazard must then be controlled. This Guideline has been developed to provide advice on the most effective control measures.

3.2.4 Review risk assessment and control measures

Control measures should be reviewed on a regular basis. The frequency of their review should be determined by considering the significance of the risks associated with the hazard. However, a review should be undertaken in the following circumstances:

- new information is made available about the risks associated with the hazard
- an accident or incident occurs
- significant changes are proposed to the workplace or work system.

3.2.5 When must employers undertake risk management?

The OHS Regulation requires employers to incorporate the process of risk management into procedures.

These are the same activities for which employers are required to consult with employees.

3.2.6 Strategies for developing effective risk management procedures

When risk management activities are undertaken the following strategies should be considered to inform the process:

- visual checks through workplace inspections
- analysing the types of work being performed and the way work is performed
- inspections of plant and equipment
- analysing workplace records on accidents, incidents or 'near misses'
- risk management information provided by suppliers or manufacturers of equipment or, in the case of hazardous substances, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
- industry codes of practice for particular hazards or work processes
- Australian Standards, which set safety standards for a range of equipment products and materials
- guidance material from WorkCover NSW or industry or professional organisations.

Further advice is provided in the *Code of Practice: Risk Assessment*.

3.2.7 Personal protective equipment (PPE)

The use of PPE to control risks is lowest on the hierarchy of control measures. The measures at the lower levels are less effective and they require more frequent reviews of the hazards and systems of work. They should only be used when other control measures are impracticable or when, after implementing other controls, a residual risk remains.

- *PPE selection and suitability*

Where PPE is to be used it should be appropriate for the risk and comply with the relevant Australian Standard or WorkCover approval. Employees should be competent in the proper selection, use and maintenance of the PPE. There should be sufficient supervision and monitoring conducted to ensure PPE is used and employees are competent in its use. PPE should be regularly inspected, maintained and replaced as necessary.

- *Eye protection*

Dust, flying objects and sunlight are the most common sources of eye damage in excavation work.

Where persons are carrying out cutting, grinding or chipping of concrete or metal, or welding they must be provided with eye protection complying with AS/NZS 1337:1992 – *Eye protectors for industrial applications*. Eye protection complying with AS/NZS 1337 should also be provided where persons carry out other work, such as carpentry or handling of chemicals, where there is a risk of eye injury. Selection, use and management systems should comply with AS/NZS 1336:1997 – *Recommended practices for occupational eye protection*.

- *Hearing protection*

Where personal hearing protection is provided it should conform with AS 1270:1988 – *Acoustics – Hearing protectors*. Control measures including training should comply with AS/NZS 1269.3:1998 – *Occupational noise management – Hearing protector program*.

- *High visibility garments/safety reflective vests*

Persons working underground or near traffic, mobile plant or equipment under operator control, should be provided with and use high visibility garments. Such garments should be selected, used and maintained in accordance with AS/NZS 4602:1999 – *High Visibility Safety Garments*. Other clothing not covered by the high visibility garment should be light coloured and all garments should be selected for best contrast with the surrounding background.

- *Safety helmets*

The use of safety helmets may prevent or lessen a head injury from falling objects or a person hitting their head against something. Where there is a likelihood of persons being injured by falling objects and overhead protection is not provided, persons must be provided with and must use an appropriate safety helmet. Appropriate safety helmets should also be provided and used where a person may strike their head against a fixed or protruding object or where there is a risk of accidental head contact with electrical hazards.

All persons on excavation sites should wear head protection that conforms to AS/NZS 1801:1997 – *Occupational protective helmets* and be used in accordance with AS/NZS 1800:1998 – *Occupational protective helmets – Selection, care and use*.

- *Safety gloves*

Where there is a risk of hand injury, such as exposure to a harmful substance, excessive heat or cold, or to a mechanical device, hand protection appropriate to the risk and that complies with AS/NZS 2161:1998 – *Occupational protective gloves* should be provided and used.

- *Waterproof clothing*

Waterproof clothing provided as a system of work relating to weather or site conditions should be effective and suitable for the task. Waterproof clothing should also incorporate light reflective features in accordance with the requirements of the section above.

3.2.8 Incident reporting

Hazards and OHS problems should be reported as soon as they are noticed so that the risks can be assessed and addressed as quickly as possible. Records of reported hazards should be kept and should include details of the action taken to remove the hazard or control the risk arising from the hazard.

The OHS Regulation also prescribes a number of workers compensation and OHS legal requirements concerning incident and injury reporting.

3.2.9 First aid



The OHS Regulation requires that employers must provide first aid facilities that are adequate for the immediate treatment of injuries and illnesses that may arise at the place of work and, if more than 25 people are employed, trained first aid personnel.

To ensure adequate first aid provisions, employers must identify their potential problems, assess their requirements and consult with employees in the process.



When determining the nature, number and location of first aid facilities and the number of trained first aid personnel, employers must take into account the location and type of work being undertaken. The type of work performed will influence the hazards and the possible harmful consequences for employees. For example, office workers will have different first aid requirements from construction workers. Workplaces using hazardous substances may require specialised first aid facilities, such as eyewash stations and emergency showers. The risk assessment process will assist in identifying the particular needs of the workplace.

Further information regarding such matters as contents of first aid kits, who qualifies as 'trained first aid personnel', and other requirements relating to first aid rooms, consult the OHS Regulation or the *First Aid in the Workplace Guide*.

3.2.10 Emergency response



The OHS Regulation specifies that an employer must ensure that, in the event of an emergency at the workplace, arrangements have been made for:

- the safe and rapid evacuation of persons from the place of work
- emergency communications
- appropriate medical treatment of injured persons
- appointment of appropriately trained persons to oversee any such evacuation and, if appropriate, the use of on-site fire fighting equipment.

3.2.11 Record keeping



The OHS Regulation requires records to be kept in the following areas:

- induction training
- hazardous substances
- confined spaces
- plant
- electricity
- asbestos
- atmospheric monitoring
- notification of accidents.

Refer to the relevant chapters of the OHS Regulation for further information.

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4. ACCURATE INSTALLATION AND INFORMATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Asset owners are required to capture and maintain accurate and up-to-date (as built) records of their underground assets.

When planning a job requiring excavation, a complete record search must be undertaken by lodging an enquiry with the central call service 'Dial Before You Dig'. Asset owners who are not members of this service must also be contacted. When an asset location is requested, asset owners may provide information on the recommended practices for work near that location or asset.

Lodging an enquiry with 'Dial Before You Dig' is as simple as visiting www.dialbeforeyoudig.com.au, phoning 1100 or faxing an enquiry to 1300 652 077. Once the records are obtained, they should remain in the work area and be accessible to all. When carrying out emergency work, every effort should be made to obtain records as soon as possible. If work must commence prior to the records being obtained, it should be carried out on the basis that underground assets are present even if an Electronic Service Detector gives the 'all clear'.

It should be also remembered that as technologies and work practices change over time, features such as the presence of warning tape may not be where you expect (see Table A). For example, the majority of telecommunication assets at joint locations are now housed in pits or manholes. However, the line between these may not be straight if obstructions were encountered during installation. Direct buried cable in rural areas may be identified by pits/manholes and marker posts. However, it cannot be assumed that a cable follows a direct path between these items.

WARNING: Asset owners' plans may not show the presence of all cables, pipes and plant. They may only show their position relative to road boundaries, property fences etc at the time of installation and the asset owners do not guarantee that such plans are accurate thereafter due to changes that may occur over time.

Do not assume depth or alignment of cables as these vary significantly. For example, road and building alignments and levels may change.

4.2 ENSURING ACCURACY OF PLANS AND RECORDS

Asset owners shall have a system of work which ensures the accuracy of plans. The system of work should be included in the asset owners' audit processes.

Improving the accuracy of existing asset plans relies on cooperation between asset owners and contractors. If during work activities, underground assets are found to be not on the plans or are in a different location, contact should be made with the source of the plans to notify of the missing information.

4.3 UNDERGROUND ASSET OWNERS INCLUDE:

- electricity generation, transmission and distribution
- rail
- Roads and Traffic Authority
- local authorities
- telecommunications
- private (eg privately owned water pipelines)
- gas transmission and distribution
- petrochemical (oil, petrol, LPG etc)
- oil
- water
- drainage
- sewerage.

(See Table A).

4.4 ELECTRICITY CABLES

4.4.1 Cable records

Cable records are in the form of plans drawn to scale or on computer based Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

The detail of the records will vary with the type of installation. For cable installed in a standard allocation, the records may provide only general cross sectional arrangements of cable and conduits together with road crossing and street lighting information.

It is common practice to negotiate a special alignment on the roadway for high voltage transmission cables. For this type of installation, the records are more detailed with reduced level and offset information provided. The details of local area distribution and of transmission cables are typically shown on separate plans.

Older installations may not be accurately recorded or reference details may have changed.

4.4.2 Cable installation

The cover for underground electricity cables and underground control cables may vary in depth. Always assume a cable may be present. See Table B.

Note: Underground electrical cables are not necessarily covered with slabs, marker tapes or other indicators of their presence and are frequently not enclosed in conduits. Some underground electrical cables may have been encased in bitumen. Hence a full risk assessment must be undertaken prior to carrying out any excavation work so as to accurately establish the exact locations of underground electrical cables.

4.4.3 Cable ancillary equipment

Associated with many cable installations are ancillary assets and pits. These may include cable joint pits, cable link pits, oil or gas pits, inspection pits and other ancillary pits. These pits will have cables or pipes that connect them to the main cables and care should be exercised when excavating between the cables and the ancillary pits. The presence of ancillary pits shall be confirmed with the electricity asset owner prior to any work.

4.5 GAS PIPES

4.5.1 Gas reticulation systems

Several methods of gas reticulation are used, from low-pressure services through to transmission systems. These systems have been constructed from materials including coated welded steel, cast iron, and a variety of plastics. In most areas, the systems are buried directly in a suitable stone-free backfill. The systems are not designed to resist the impact of tools or mechanical plant or to be left unsupported over any great distance. The operating pressures range from as low as 2kPa up to as high as 15MPa for a transmission pipeline system.

4.5.2 Pipe records

The records for all high and low pressure gas distribution mains are maintained in the form of plans drawn using Computer Aided Design system (CAD). The detail of the records will show the size of pipe and the type of material, changes in direction. Please note gas consumer services are generally not shown on plans. High-pressure transmission pipelines are generally located within a pipeline easement, therefore records of these pipelines are in the form of alignment sheets specific to the individual pipeline.

The location of high and low-pressure distribution mains on the plans are shown at a nominal distance from the building line. The actual pipe alignment will be shown in text as an offset distance in metres from the Building Line (MBL) – also could be known as the ‘property boundary’. When locating gas distribution pipes always reference the offset distance from the building line as minor changes in alignment will not be shown graphically.

4.5.3 Pipe installation

Most pipes laid in recent years may have a marking tape or polymeric plastic slab laid above the pipes for identification when excavating. However, these tapes or slabs may have been damaged by other excavations in the area since the initial construction and not replaced. For location purposes, plastic pipe may have been laid with a trace wire to enable the main to be located using a cable locator. Again, it is important these tracer wires are not interfered with or broken, as it makes future location of these pipes very difficult. If you do break the trace wire, please ensure that the wire is rejoined and coated with electrical tape. Steel mains and pipelines will not have a trace wire as they are metallic and can be detected. Other structures, such as siphon points, valve pits, regulator pits and other varied components may be installed in the pipeline. Care needs to be taken to locate these before excavation.

While the plans may show the expected location of underground distribution mains, consumer services are not shown. Properties should be checked to ascertain whether gas meters are present. If so, the services normally run at right angles to the distribution main to the service connection at the meter. However, it cannot be assumed that a pipe follows a direct path between these items. Be aware the consumer service may receive its supply from a distribution main on the opposite side of the road. The installed depth of consumer services varies – refer to Table B. In circumstances where the correct depth of cover has not been achievable, mains and services may be encased in concrete or laid in copper pipe.

All high-pressure steel distribution mains and transmission pipelines have corrosion protection systems. These systems form part of the pipeline and incorporate the protective coating, test points and galvanic anodes at various points along its length. If these are broken or damaged, it should be reported to the gas utility immediately. They are easily rectified but can be extremely difficult to locate if the damage is not reported.

4.6 WATER AND SEWER PIPES

4.6.1 Pipeline types

Cast iron and steel pipes are often joined with lead. These and asbestos pipes are easily disturbed and brittle. Mild steel and ductile cast iron pipes have external protective coatings which, when damaged, significantly reduce the life of the pipes. Copper pipes are very soft and easily compressed or bent without necessarily breaking, but their flow capacity can be significantly reduced. Recycled water areas have dual pipe and service systems.

The water supply system in residential areas has traditionally formed part of the multiple earth neutral (MEN) system of the electricity distribution network. More recent use of PVC and polypropylene materials may adversely impact the MEN system. Refer to Section 5 for more information.

4.6.2 Depth and location

Water authorities, developers and local councils maintain records of pipeline locations.

As with other assets, there can be great variations in pipeline depths, depending on their age and the amount of surface reconstruction over the years. More recently, some water assets have been co-located with other assets in shared trenches. This raises the potential problem of simultaneous damage to several assets.

Some pipes may be encased in concrete to provide added support and protection.

4.7 TELECOMMUNICATION CABLES

Telecommunications cables developed for underground installations have changed in line with technology requirements.

Plans provided by Telstra are circuit diagrams only and indicate the presence of telecommunications plant in the general vicinity of the area shown. Due to the nature of the Telstra plant and the age of some cables and records, it is impossible to ascertain the location of all Telstra plant from plans. Telecommunications plant seldom follow straight lines and careful on site investigation is essential to uncover and reveal its exact position.

4.8 ABANDONED AND RETIRED UNDERGROUND ASSETS LEFT IN-SITU

In cases where assets are no longer to be utilised and are to be left in-situ, they are to be disconnected and/or filled, capped, plugged or otherwise rendered safe to avoid any future problems.

All such assets shall be consistent with the following points:

- treated as in-service unless otherwise positively proven out of service
- marked accordingly on the appropriate asset record
- if out of service retired or abandoned assets etc are to be interfered with, the owner of the asset should be contacted and arrangements made to locate the asset
- an asset shall not be used by others without prior agreement with the asset owner. This is so that both organisations' records can be updated
- where an asset is inserted inside an out of service, retired or abandoned conduit, pipe or duct, the records shall show this information
- if assets are sold or disposed of to another owner, then both organisations records should show such information.

4.9 TABLE A: THE INSTALLATION OF VARIOUS TYPES OF UNDERGROUND ASSETS

Assets have been installed underground over the last 150 years. Therefore you may come across a large range of pipe and cable materials, their installation technologies and protection barrier methods. The table below gives an overview of these different techniques. It is not a complete list and it should be remembered that you may come across underground assets that have no barrier protection or other indication of their presence, for example underbores.

Utility/Industry	Asset	Traditional Techniques	Current Techniques	New Technologies
Electrical cables (power, rail and tram)	Transmission: Extra High Voltage (EHV)	Buried direct, conduits (orange PVC), ductlines, concrete encased, fibro asbestos cement, steel, earthenware or encased in bitumen	Direct burial in trench, ducts	Trench-less technology including directional drilling Conduits installed by directional drilling. Variations in alignment and depth may occur. Multiple conduits can be installed using this method
	Distribution: High Voltage (HV) and Low Voltage (LV)	Protective covers	Some thrust boring across roads	
	Supervisory and signalling cables	bricks/tiles, terracotta, concrete, polymeric	Marker tape – polymeric	
		Marker tapes – polymeric	Protective covers – polymeric and concrete	
		May be direct buried	Surface markers	
	Cathodic protection		Nil	
	Earthing rods and conductors	Direct buried	Direct buried	
	Conduits and ducts	Orange PVC	Orange PVC	
	Power poles and lattice towers	Risk assess to ensure that 1) structure will not be undermined and 2) cable is not coiled around base of pole		
Gas pipelines	Transmission	Coal tar enamel (warning contains asbestos) coated steel pipe Blue polyethylene coated steel pipe	Yellow polyethylene coated steel pipe Red fusion bonded epoxy coated steel pipe Construction techniques included trenching, cased boring, horizontal directional drilling	

Utility/Industry	Asset	Traditional Techniques	Current Techniques	New Technologies
	Distribution High Pressure	Blue polyethylene coated steel pipe Yellow polyethylene coated steel pipe	Yellow polyethylene coated steel pipe Construction techniques included trenching, cased boring, horizontal directional drilling	High density polyethylene yellow stripe/black pipe
	Distribution Low Pressure	Tar coated wooden pipe Cast iron pipe Blue PVC pipe	Yellow nylon pipe Medium density yellow polyethylene pipe High density polyethylene black and yellow stripe pipe Insertion of disused cast iron pipe with nylon or polyethylene pipe Construction techniques included trenching, cased boring, horizontal directional drilling	
	Consumer services	Cast iron pipe Galvanised steel pipe	Yellow nylon pipe Medium density yellow polyethylene pipe High density polyethylene yellow stripe/black pipe Insertion of disused cast iron or galvanised pipe with nylon or polyethylene pipe Construction techniques included trenching, grundamat boring, horizontal directional drilling	

Utility/Industry	Asset	Traditional Techniques	Current Techniques	New Technologies
Water mains and services	Pipes 15 mm to 3000 mm, valves, hydrants, chambers	Cast iron, steel, cement coated steel, asbestos cement, copper, glass reinforced plastic ductile iron, polyethylene, PVC or concrete encased steel or ductile iron	Pipes usually installed by trenching Pipe cracking and slip lining renewal technique also used Some directional drilling Some thrust boring across roads Surface fittings for access and operation Chambers for valve access	Dual supply mains and services in recycled water areas
	Property connections	Service connections to properties are usually copper in smaller sizes and iron or steel in larger sizes (fire services and industrial)		Dual supply mains and services in recycled water areas
Sewerage mains and services	Pits pipes 15 mm to 1800 mm, tunnels, valves, connections	Cast iron, mild steel, cement lined steel, asbestos cement, copper, glass reinforced plastic, ductile cast iron or PVC, vitreous clay	Pipes installed by trenching Sewer re-lining or replacement using trenchless technologies (eg pipe cracking and slip lining)	On site treatment and reuse systems Jointless systems
Stormwater, grey water and drainage pipelines and services	Pits pipes 15 mm to 1800 mm, tunnels, shafts	Cast iron, mild steel, cement lined steel, asbestos cement, copper, ductile cast iron or PVC reinforced concrete	Installation generally by trenching	

Utility/Industry	Asset	Traditional Techniques	Current Techniques	New Technologies
Communications cables	Phone lines	<p>Fibro asbestos cement (FAC) pipes and ducting. Galvanised iron (GI) pipe – various diameters</p> <p>Rocla concrete pipes</p> <p>Earthenware pipe</p> <p>Tunnels – Sydney CBD and servicing some other major telephone exchanges</p> <p>White PVC pipe 10 mm to 100 mm internal diameter</p> <p>Black PVC</p> <p>Directly buried cables PVC or armored steel sheath</p> <p>Polyethylene</p>	<p>Because of the long operational life of conduits, cables providing new technology services are often hauled into existing conduits</p> <p>All new standard conduit installations are white PVC of internal diameter 20 mm – 100 mm.</p> <p>Galvanised iron (GI) conduits are used for special purpose applications</p> <p>Conduits installed by directional drilling.</p> <p>Variations in alignment and depth may occur. Multiple conduits can be installed using this method</p> <p>Direct drilling technologies</p>	Conduits installed by directional drilling. Variations in alignment and depth may occur. Multiple ducts can be installed using this method
	Co-axial, data and signalling cables	As above	As above	
	Broadband, copper and fibre optic cables	As above	<p>As above</p> <p>Directly buried fibre optic cables will generally have been installed with marker tape above the cable containing a metallic wire</p> <p>Fibre Optic cables in conduits are installed by directional drilling technologies. They do not have marking tapes installed above the cable. In this case there may be no metal marking tapes installed</p>	

Utility/Industry	Asset	Traditional Techniques	Current Techniques	New Technologies
	Conduits and ducts	As above	As above	
Oil transmission pipelines and valves	High Pressure (above 1050 kPa) Regularly signposted	Coal tar enamel (warning contains asbestos) coated steel pipe AS 2885-1997 . <i>Pipelines for Gas & Liquefied Petroleum</i>	Yellow polyethylene coated steel pipe	
Privately owned pipelines	Chemical	Mostly similar to oil and gas transmission pipelines above (WorkCover Dangerous goods pipelines) Regularly signposted.		

Note: It is essential to treat a cable or pipe as high voltage or high pressure until it has been positively identified as being otherwise.

5. HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

5.1 SAFETY INFORMATION

Consideration must be given to the safety of individuals and the community, especially to provide adequate safety barriers and safe pedestrian access around the worksite. Additionally, PPE applicable to the particular operation must be used.

Excavation within the zone of influence may destabilise the underground asset or supporting structures resulting in damage to the asset.

5.1.1 Some of the dangers when working near underground assets

- *Gas*

Damage to gas assets can cause gas escapes which may lead to fires or explosions if an ignition source is present. There are two types of leaks following damage to the asset:

 - damage which causes an immediate escape. In this case, there is a risk to those working at the site
 - damage which causes an escape some time after the incident. This may be through damage which weakens the asset casing or the result of poor reinstatement practice. In this instance, the public is mainly at risk.
- *Electricity*
 - an injury resulting from damage to live electricity cables is usually caused by electric shock or the explosive effects of arcing current and by the fire or flames which may follow when the sheath of a cable is penetrated by an object. Damage and injury may also occur if the cable is crushed or contact is made between the individual phases of a cable. The presence of gas or a mixture of gases in a trench could be ignited by an electrical charge or an electrical arc resulting in a fire or explosion, the severity of which depends on the gaseous mixture
 - gas can be present in the ground due to gas pipe damage or leakage, sewage pits, chemical reactions or leaching and the accumulation of airborne gases in low lying areas. Gas can also be introduced by the nature of the work being undertaken such as oxy-acetylene cutting or chemical grouting
 - consideration should be given to conducting a risk assessment to determine if a trench or the work constitutes a confined space.
- *Petroleum or oil pipelines*
 - the result of damaging these assets is similar to that of gas assets. However, there is the additional risk of significant environmental issues such as contamination of waterways.
- *Water pipes and sewers*
 - some pipelines transport water under high pressure. Some older water pipes are also made from asbestos cement. Damaged water pipes have great potential to affect other assets and structures, either directly or by washing away their supports ie thrust blocks

- the main danger from sewer damage is the contamination of a broken water main or asset, damage to the environment or disease from exposure to sewage. Some sewer lines are high pressure. Toxic and explosive gases may also be present in both sewer lines and stormwater drains
- persons working on metallic water pipes are at risk of electric shock due to an electrical fault near a customer's premises or a mains neutral fault in the street. Metallic water pipes are usually bonded to the electrical earthing system and are a path of low resistance. Stray electrical current will often flow through the bonded metallic water pipe. When the pipe is cut or disconnected, either side of the pipe could become live causing a person to receive a serious or fatal electric shock. The consumer is also at risk of an electric shock under the same circumstances.
- *Telecommunications*
 - consequences could be the isolation of whole communities, disruption of interstate and international telecommunications, inability to contact emergency services, loss of telephone, mobile phone, data and television services
 - cables containing optical fibres carry light signals generated by Class 3B lasers that can cause injury to the eye. This infra-red beam is invisible to the naked eye and exposure to it should be avoided. Small optic fibre particles are capable of entering the bloodstream causing injury or death.
- *Pipelines containing hazardous substances and dangerous goods.*

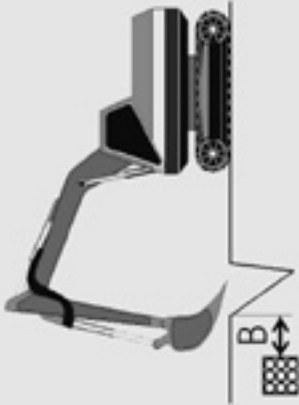
5.1.2 Safety considerations for Low, High or Extra High Voltage electrical cables

- High voltage (HV): same as for low voltage except the approach distances are variable. For more information refer to Table B.
- Extra high voltage cables (EHV): all work in the vicinity of extra high voltage cables must be undertaken with the consent and under the supervision of the asset owner. Contact with extra high voltage electric current will result in serious burns and/or death. For more information refer to Table B.
- Notwithstanding any guidance on the use of blasting as a means of excavation, where blasting is to take place within 200 m of an underground asset, the asset owner should be contacted for any special requirements.

5.1.3 Electrical earthing of metallic pipes

Prior to the removal or the repair/replacement of metallic piping, workers must ensure that an effective electrical bond across the break is maintained at all times.

5.2 TABLE B: TYPES OF ASSETS AND LIMITS OF UNDERGROUND APPROACH

Assets	Clearances	No Go Zone For Powered Excavation	Controls	Typical Depths
Types of underground assets (Note: The owners of assets registered with the Dial Before You Dig service and covered by this Guideline require an enquiry through this free service and the compliance with any directive issued with information regarding the asset)	The minimum approach distance for individuals carrying out work near underground assets	<p>Distance 'B' is the minimum approach distance for powered excavating machines</p>  <p>For directional boring across the line of an asset a minimum clearance of 300 mm from the asset shall be maintained</p> <p>For directional boring parallel to the asset and at the level of the asset, a clearance of 500 mm shall be maintained from the edge of the nearest asset. It may be necessary to dig trial holes to prove the location of the nearest asset at points along the route. See Section 6.10</p>	<p>If the risk assessment identifies a potential risk of making contact with both underground and overhead assets, two safety observers would be required. One observer to ensure that the machinery maintains a safe distance from underground assets, the other observer to ensure a safe distance from the overhead powerlines</p> <p>In the case of gas or electricity assets, an appropriate fire extinguishing system must be at the worksite</p> <p>If the width and/or depth of the excavation will expose the asset, the asset owner must be contacted prior to commencing work</p>	

Assets	Clearances	No Go Zone For Powered Excavation	Controls	Typical Depths
Low and Medium Pressure services and Low pressure mains	N/A	300 mm	<p>Pot-hole to confirm location of service</p> <p>The position of the asset will not appear on the maps</p>	300 – 450 mm
Medium Pressure mains	N/A	300 mm	<p>Pot-hole to confirm location of asset</p> <p>The code of practice for shafts, tunnels and trenches, and the guide to dangers of poorly ventilated workplaces</p> <p>Only one individual at a time should be excavating if hand excavation is being undertaken in a confined space. Another should act as an observer and be able to operate any breathing, escape or fire equipment required</p> <p>The elimination of an ignition source in the event of an escape</p> <p>Excavation below underground assets should not be undertaken within a distance of 300 mm below the asset located at the lowest level</p> <p>Note: All transmission pipelines involving gas, oil and petrochemical have separate requirements and the asset owners should be contacted.</p>	450 – 750 mm

Assets	Clearances	No Go Zone For Powered Excavation	Controls	Typical Depths
High Pressure services, mains and pipelines	300 mm with hand tools and supervision from Network Authority	1000 mm	Powered excavation within 300 – 1000 mm is only permitted under supervision and with a Permit to Work from Asset Owner Also see Controls for medium pressure mains immediately above	750 – 1200 mm
Low Voltage Electricity cables – voltages less than or equal to 1000V (1kV)	Close proximity with use of hand tools	300 mm	Must contact asset owner for specific conditions	450 – 750 mm
Electricity conductors from 11,000V (11kV) up to 33,000V (33kV)	Close proximity with use of hand tools	600 mm	Must contact asset owner for specific conditions	900 mm
Underground sub-transmission cables 33,000V up to 132,000V (132kV)	Must contact asset owner	Must contact asset owner	Must be carried out under the supervision of the asset owner	900 mm
High Voltage Electricity cables – voltages from 1000V (1kV) up to 33kV	Close proximity with use of hand tools	Must contact asset owner	Must contact asset owner for specific conditions	600 – 1000 mm
Extra High Voltage Electricity Transmission cables – voltages above (132kV) and 330,000V (330kV)	Must contact asset owner	Must contact asset owner	Work must be carried out under the supervision of the asset owner	800 – 1200 mm
Telecommunications cables	Contact asset owner for specific conditions	Contact asset owner for specific conditions	Must contact the asset owner for specific conditions	Typically 450 – 600 mm , other assets to 1200 mm
Water pipelines	N/A	300 mm (if pipeline is 200 mm or greater in diameter)	Pot-hole to confirm location of asset	Min 450 mm
Sewerage pipelines	N/A	300 mm (if pipeline is 200 mm or greater in diameter)	Pot-hole to confirm location of asset	Between 600 mm to 10 (ten) metres

5.3 ON-SITE CHECKING

Prior to any excavation work, check at least 100 m along the footpath in each direction and around nearby corners for indications of existing assets. These include:

- indicators or markers for underground assets, drainage pits and manhole covers
- damaged footpaths, driveways or depressions which may indicate the presence of a trench
- cables running up a pole
- overhead cables near the worksite
- control cabinets
- no overhead wires to a building or premise
- above ground connection cabinets
- transformers for cathodic protection on power poles
- light poles without an overhead service
- service pits for gas, water, electricity, communications, sewerage and drainage connections
- down pipes or vent poles
- underground storage tank fill points and venting systems
- kerb markings
- water valves
- fire hydrants and plugs
- sprinkler systems
- road repairs
- trap doors or access-covers for:
 - access to underground electricity substations
 - access to cable jointing pits or tunnels
 - access to sewerage or stormwater trunks
 - access underground gas regulators, siphons and valve assemblies
 - access to shafts
 - link box pits, oil tank pits and other ancillary underground pits.
- domestic service pits
- gas or water meters
- electricity pillars and meter boxes
- any other signs out of character with the surrounding area such as a clearing for an easement.

If such indications exist, the asset must be located by hand or another approved method.

5.4 PLAN OR DRAWING READING

Although each asset owner may have their own type of plan, with special notations and legends, the basic principle of map reading can be applied.

Telecommunications plans, and in some cases electrical plans, may provide a detailed representation of the asset or network. When reviewing the information:

- identify the streets or buildings nearby and position yourself so the streets correspond with the plan/s
- use the scale and measurements indicated on the plan/s to pinpoint your exact location
- remember, drawings may NOT be to scale
- many plans reference the asset location from an adjacent property alignment
- determine if measurements are metric or imperial, or a combination of both
- identify nearby pipes or cables and mark their recorded location
- cross-reference any supplementary plans or details
- identify any of the items listed below and assess their relationship to each other to determine if a measurement has altered:
 - building lines
 - pits and poles
 - offsets
 - turning points.

Note: Inaccuracies can and do occur, both on plans and in the ground. If in doubt, check with the asset owner. Never guess or assume!

Asset owners' plans show only the presence of some cables, pipes and plant. They only show their position relative to road boundaries, property fences etc at the time of installation and the utilities do not warrant or hold out that such plans are accurate thereafter due to changes that may occur over time. DO NOT ASSUME DEPTH OR ALIGNMENT of cables or pipes as these vary significantly. For example, road and building alignments and levels may change.

6. MANAGING THE RISKS

6.1 MANAGING RISKS IN THE WORKPLACE



Employers and self-employed persons must identify any foreseeable hazards, assess their risks and take action to eliminate or control them.

A hazard identification and risk assessment process must be carried out at the planning and preparation stage by the employer/contractor doing the work to determine what risks may arise when the work is being carried out. Safe systems of work must then be put in place to eliminate or control these risks. For tunnel construction work the safe system of work must also be documented in a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS).

6.1.1 Monitor and review risk assessments and control measures



The OHS Regulation states that employers must review risk assessments and measures adopted to control risks whenever:

- there is evidence that the risk assessment is no longer valid
- an injury or illness results from exposure to a hazard to which the risk assessment relates
- a significant change is planned to the place of work, work practices or work procedures.

6.1.2 Safe work method statements (SWMS)



The OHS Regulation requires SWMS where the cost of the work undertaken exceeds \$250,000 or for defined high risk construction work. Construction work in tunnels is defined as high risk construction work, so tunnelling work requires a SWMS.

The SWMS:

- describes how the work is to be carried out
- identifies the work activities assessed as having safety risks
- identifies the safety risks
- describes the control measures that will be applied to the work activities. It also includes a description of the equipment used in the work, the standards or codes to be complied with, the qualifications of the personnel doing the work and the training required to do the work.

A SWMS requires the work method to be presented in a logical sequence. The hazards associated with each process are to be identified and the measures for controlling these hazards specified.

Break down each job into a series of basic job steps to identify the hazards and potential accidents in each part of the job. The description of the process should not be so broad that it leaves out activities with the potential to cause accidents and prevents proper identification of the hazards.

Employees of the workforce should be involved/consulted in the development and implementation of any SWMS.

All persons involved in carrying out the work should understand the SWMS before commencing the work.

6.1.3 Consultation with relevant parties prior to commencing work

The planning before the start of work, which may affect a utility asset, must include but not limited to:

- consultation with local councils
- consultation with asset owners to obtain agreement on the use of out of service, retired or unused assets
- advising affected residents/occupants
- obtaining permit requirements and conditions for undertaking the works
- identifying and determining exact location of assets
- establishing methods to be adopted to protect existing assets
- further consultation as required by the scope of works
- consultation with 'Dial Before You Dig' and the asset registers of other infrastructure owners not registered with 'Dial Before You Dig'
- consultation with roads authority (eg RTA, local council or private body)
- consultation with local councils in terms of storm water assets and work in council owned roads.

Where underground assets exist, the precise location of the assets shall be established in conjunction with the asset owner by pot-holing (or equivalent non-destructive asset location techniques) prior to the principal excavation commencing.

Consideration must be given to the presence of private property assets eg telecommunications, gas, stormwater, sewerage and water assets. These private property assets are unlikely to be found on any plans and are best identified by a visual on-site inspection.

The use of an Electronic Service Detection Device to survey the ground for buried pipes and cables, before commencing excavation, should be considered.

The close out process of the project or scope of work may typically involve recording the 'as constructed' diagram of the asset and providing this record to the appropriate agency with details of:

- finished surface level
- depth of asset
- alignments from property boundary and/or kerb etc
- type of cover or warning device installed eg warning tape, concrete slab, mechanical polymeric protection strip etc
- new ownership details of the asset
- assets retired, removed, declared out of service etc
- type, size, location and installation method of assets

- surface and underground markings installed
- advice to any authorities, agencies etc on the completion of the project or scope of works
- cancellation of any permits, authorities etc
- the provision of a copy of the asset plans to the new owner.

For more information on how to safely dig near an asset, specific information is provided on the Telstra website via the following link www.telstra.com.au/dialb4udig/digging.htm
Excavation with hand tools shall be carried out carefully up to but not closer than the minimum distances specified in Table B.

6.1.4 Planning and liaising with other authorities

When planning, it is important to discuss and consider the following areas:

- existing utility assets
- duration of the project and scope of works
- future planned assets
- opportunities for coordination of works
- shared trenching opportunities
- thermal impacts on EHV electricity assets
- changing ground surface levels
- installing heat sources (eg other electricity assets)
- creating underground voids (eg stormwater assets)
- changing backfill materials
- possible limitations in information available
- opportunities to improve information availability
- effect on traffic
- opportunities to isolate or relocate existing assets
- provision of visual identification devices
- asset owner and other authorities' concerns, conditions and expected working procedures
- any requirement/s for the worksite involving:
 - access to assets
 - permit conditions
 - recording of infrastructure, assets locations or relocations
 - financial costs
 - individual, asset or community safety
 - worksite and traffic management requirements and railway safety management requirements
 - reinstatement requirements (this liaison is in addition to the statutory notification required by legislation).

Consideration must be given to the operation of heavy plant over potentially fragile underground assets.

6.2 RAILWAY ASSETS

Rail easements have numerous electrical power, signalling, communication cables, compressed air and drainage lines that are owned and maintained by the Rail Authority. These assets vary in type of construction and are documented to various degrees of accuracy.

Numerous utility service providers and other private parties also jointly use the rail easement. Access to the rail easement is strictly regulated by the requirements of AS 4292.1: 2006 and AS 4799: 2000.

Access to information relating to the location of the various rail assets is issued on application.

6.3 SERVICE TUNNELS

Many utilities own or share service tunnels. These will have shafts plus manholes at the surface or other surface infrastructure supporting the tunnel environment.

6.4 EXCAVATION AND TRENCHING

To maintain essential structural support and the protection of other existing assets, excavations in the vicinity must not disturb the embedment around each asset (see Table B for minimum approach distances and to identify if the asset owner must be contacted for specific approach conditions). This information should be supplied by the asset owner through a 'Dial Before You Dig' request. Where this is not possible, the relevant asset owners must be consulted and their permission first obtained.

- If a cable or pipe is exposed, the contractor must ensure that any angular material such as rock or gravel does not mix into the embedment material
- Excavations in any easement must be backfilled, compacted and re-sealed to the appropriate Authority's standard at the completion of excavation
- Temporary restorations in roads and footways must be of sufficient quality to ensure the safety of pedestrians and vehicles until the final restoration is undertaken. Temporary restorations must be regularly checked by the responsible party to confirm their integrity
- Refer to NSW Code of Practice, *Excavation*
- Refer to:

AUS-SPEC 306U *Road Openings and Restoration* (2004 and earlier additions)

AUS-SPEC 7200 C0219 *Construction – Roadways – Road openings and restorations for utilities* (2007).

6.5 ASSETS NEAR BRIDGE APPROACHES

Often underground assets will be congested at the approach to bridges. Assets' typical depths may vary substantially, rising and falling sharply and at much shallower depths than elsewhere as they are channelled into shared allocated spaces on the bridge. Road safety barriers are often very close to heavily congested services at the approaches to bridges. Construction staging and footing design for such barriers should consider impacts on assets and, where possible, construct barriers prior to constructing the assets.

6.6 ASSETS AROUND POLES

Unless otherwise agreed, underground assets and other obstructions around poles are to be kept a minimum distance of 300 mm from the periphery of the pole, to allow inspections by asset owner staff.

No excavation within 10 metres of a Single Wire Earth Return (SWER) transformer pole is to occur without the approval of the local electricity asset owner.

It should be noted that the NSW Service and Installation Rules require a sketch of the underground service/consumers mains to be marked inside the switchboard.

6.7 TRAFFIC CONTROLS

All work carried out on RTA NSW controlled roads must be done in accordance with the RTA's *Traffic Control at Work Sites Manual*. As this manual is considered to be the benchmark for traffic control in NSW, **all** works carried out within the road corridor or on adjacent pathways should be conducted in accordance with this manual.

6.8 EMERGENCY WORK

While there will be times when, due to pressing requirements, the timeframe for starting work will prevent some of the normal controls from being completed, this will not diminish the responsibility of worksite controllers to do everything that is reasonable and practical that is within their power to ensure the health, safety and welfare of persons affected by their actions.

6.9 VERTICAL BORING

For any boring within 500 mm of an underground asset, the location of the asset/s shall first be proved by careful hand digging (pot-holing) or equivalent asset location techniques and:

- a minimum clearance of 300 mm from the edge of the underground asset shall be maintained for pole hole boring
- lead in excavations shall be used.

Note: All transmission assets including EHV electricity cables, pipelines involving gas, oil and petrochemicals have separate requirements and the asset owners should be contacted.

6.10 DIRECTIONAL BORING

- When boring across the line of an underground asset, the location of the asset/s shall be positively proven by hand digging (pot-holing) or proven by another approved method.
- All transmission pipelines involving gas, oil and petrochemicals have separate requirements and the asset owners should be contacted.
- For boring under electricity cables, it is necessary to excavate a slit trench beside the cables to confirm the depth of the cables and ensure the drill is not within the minimum approach distance of the cable specified in Table B.

- Additional precautions and clearances are required for directional boring near or beneath sub-transmission cables, normally located in roadways. If the bore is to pass within 2 metres of any electrical cable or conduit the asset owner must be notified as the clearances for HV and EHV may be significantly greater.

See Table B for further information on clearances.

6.11 MECHANICAL EXCAVATING PLANT

Reference should be made to WorkCover's *Moving Plant on Construction Sites* code of practice.

Mechanical excavating plant may be used with care up to, but not closer than, the minimum distances as specified in Table B.

- Where the excavation is being carried out parallel to or across underground asset/s, location of the asset/s must be proven by careful hand tool excavation (pot-holing) or another endorsed method used to positively locate the asset prior to mechanical excavation.
- If an excavation must exceed the depth of the asset and will disturb the protective cover, slab, other asset/s or the bedding material around the asset/s, the asset owner/s must be contacted to determine if the asset/s is to be relocated.
- Excavations must be reinstated to comply with the asset owner's requirements.
- **Where plant is required to operate over underground assets, such as in major road reconstruction, the clearances as specified in Table B must be maintained. Alternatively, if Table B cannot be complied with, the asset can be mechanically protected by an engineered structure agreed to by the asset owner.**

Note: All transmission cables, pipelines and petrochemical networks may have separate requirements and the asset owners should be contacted before commencing work.

6.12 EXPLOSIVES

The use of explosives by licensed operators must only be used after a comprehensive risk assessment has been undertaken in consultation with all owners of assets in the vicinity and must be consistent with the requirements of the *Explosives Regulation 2005*.

6.13 PILE DRIVING

Pile driving adjacent to underground assets must not take place without authority from the owner of the assets. The exact location and depth of all adjacent assets shall be physically proved by hand digging (pot-holing) or equivalent asset location techniques prior to commencement of work.

The effects of vibration on the asset must be considered when planning the work.

6.14 IDENTIFICATION OF ASSETS NOT ON PLANS

Where an asset that is not identified on any plans etc is located in the field, work should be suspended until the asset is positively identified and any remedial controls put in place. Depending on the nature of the risk, it may be necessary to notify the asset owner and obtain a revised plan.

6.15 ASSET SEPARATION DISTANCES

To avoid safety and operational conflicts resulting from space infringement issues, refer to the Street Allocation Diagrams in Section 13.

7. SAFE SYSTEMS OF WORK

A critical part of planning safe systems of work is making sure that the plans are accurate. With some assets installed over 60 years ago, it is likely that changes would have been made to the surface of the land at some stage. Road widening and regrading of surfaces are common causes for inaccuracies in records. For this reason, when working from old records, pot-holing and/or pipe and cable locating devices should be used. The relevant authority or asset owner should be told of any inaccuracies in records.

Asset owners typically require notification of a major project or where the project may require supply of a service or product outside normal residential demand.

A safe system of work should be sufficiently robust to include site controls that will ensure assets on construction sites are not damaged. All those who dig the ground should be aware of the assets in the area before they dig and have appropriate controls in place. Particular attention needs to be given to relocated assets and persons new to the site to ensure they are aware of the assets and their locations.

At the project planning stage it is important to consider minimising damage to surface infrastructure and disruption of services to residents, pedestrians and traffic. Any construction or maintenance technique should ensure adequate clearances are maintained between assets and that other assets crossings are identified.

Access to assets must be maintained at all times to ensure emergency and scheduled maintenance activities can be carried out by the asset owner. Contractors should also give consideration at the planning stage for site storage of material and traffic areas associated with construction activities so these do not impede access to or damage assets.

Consideration should also be given to the appropriate level of supervision and training, including specific industry awareness training, for an individual undertaking work near any gas or electrical assets.

7.1 EXCAVATION USING NON-POWERED HAND TOOLS

For more information on how to safely dig near an asset, specific information is provided on the Telstra website via the following link www.telstra.com.au/dialb4udig/digging.htm. Excavation with hand tools shall be carried out carefully up to, but not closer than, the minimum distances specified in Table B.

There is a duty of care when excavating near cables, pipes and plant. Before using machines to excavate, **underground assets must first be exposed by pot-holing with non-conductive** tools to identify its location. Damage can also result in serious injury or death to workers and widespread disruption to services and traffic.

7.1.1 Work on top of or below an underground asset

No disturbance of the underground assets, including any mechanical cover (eg concrete or polymeric cover slab), should occur without prior notification to the asset owner.

Excavation must not be carried out below an underground asset unless steps are taken to ensure that:

- the asset/s or the integrity of the asset and support material is not damaged

- under-crossing shall be at right angles whenever possible
- such excavation below the asset/s should not come within the distance specified in Table B.

Note: all transmission cables, pipelines and petrochemical networks may have separate requirements and the asset owners should be contacted before commencing work

- steps must be taken in consultation with the asset owners to ensure the asset is adequately supported.

Note: Also see Section 6.10 Directional Boring.

7.1.2 Work beside an underground asset

If any excavation beside underground assets comes within the clearances specified in Table B, then the asset owner must be notified prior to work commencing. Measures should be agreed upon to ensure the stability of the surrounding soil or material.

7.2 ACCIDENTAL CONTACT WITH UNDERGROUND ASSETS

In the event of an inadvertent contact with an underground asset, it is essential to notify the asset owner and comply with the reporting requirements under the OHS Regulation (Chapter 12).

7.2.1 Electrical assets

Should contact be made with a live overhead power line or a flash-over occur between a live overhead power line and a crane or an item of mobile plant, the following actions shall be taken:

- an attempt should be made to break the machinery's contact with the live overhead power line by moving the jib or driving the machine clear
- if it is not possible to break the contact with the live overhead power line, the operator of the crane or mobile plant should remain inside the cabin of the crane or on the plant item. The network operator should be called immediately to isolate power to the live overhead power line. The operator must remain in place until the power has been isolated and the 'all clear' given by the network operator



When a crane or item of plant inadvertently contacts overhead power lines, circuit protective devices may operate to automatically turn the power off. However, some protection devices are designed to automatically reclose thereby re-energising the power lines after a short period of time, typically 1–4 seconds.

- if it is essential to leave the cabin or the operator's position due to fire or other life threatening reason, then jump clear of the equipment. Do not touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. When moving away from the equipment, the operator should hop or shuffle away from the plant item (with both feet together) until at least 8 metres from the nearest part of the crane or plant. **Under no circumstances run or walk from the crane or item of plant as voltage gradients passing through the ground may cause electricity to pass through the body resulting in an electric shock**

- warn all other personnel and members of the public to keep 8 metres clear from the crane or item of plant. Do not touch or allow persons to touch any part of the crane or plant item and do not allow persons to approach or re-enter the vehicle until the network operator has determined the site safe. Remember electricity flows through the ground, so an electric shock could be received from walking close to the scene. If the crane or plant operator is immobilised, ensure the power supply has been isolated and the site made safe before giving assistance
- untrained, unequipped persons should not attempt to rescue a person receiving an electric shock. All too often secondary deaths occur because others get electrocuted trying to help earlier victims. If the crane or plant operator is immobilised, ensure the power supply has been isolated and the site has been made safe before giving assistance.

7.2.2 Gas assets

Should an incident involving gas assets occur, the following actions should be taken:

- all work should cease immediately
- operator is to shut down the plant or equipment UNLESS this process may provide an ignition source for any escaping gas
- it is essential to leave the cab or operator station, trench or enclosure and maintain an exclusion perimeter due to the risk of explosion or fire. Do not attempt to use any instrument which may provide an ignition source near the gas escape. This may include mobile phones, two way radios, etc
- warn all other personnel and/or public to keep clear from the worksite and equipment. DO NOT attempt to approach, re-enter or start the vehicle until the relevant authorities have determined the site is safe
- contact the fire brigade on 000 if life and/or property are threatened
- facilitate First Aid treatment and seek medical aid as required
- advise your organisation's emergency contact and request they immediately notify the relevant authorities, including the relevant asset owner
- initiate the emergency management plan and incident investigation process.

7.2.3 Sewerage assets

Should an incident involving sewerage assets occur, the following actions should be taken:

- cease work, make the site safe and contact the sewerage asset owner as soon as possible. Local circumstances and/or ownership should be considered
- if contaminated, shower or wash down with copious amounts of water. Remove any contaminated clothing as soon as practical
- there is a risk of infection from ingestion or eye contact. If eyes are contaminated, flush with copious amounts fresh potable water. If ingested, seek medical advice
- for skin contact, wash with soap and water. For broken skin and abrasions, also seek medical advice
- protect the public and watercourses from exposure to raw or untreated sewage
- if damage to a sewer pipe occurs during construction works, take appropriate steps to prevent surrounding material entering the pipe.

7.2.4 Water assets

- Cease work, make the site safe and contact the asset owner.

7.2.5 Telecommunications assets

- Report any damage to Telstra assets by phoning **13 22 03**.
- Contact specific asset owner if not owned by Telstra.

7.3 COOPERATION WITH AUTHORITIES

Constructing authorities and others operating in a public road reserve, rail reserve or private property have a duty of care to protect the existing assets of utility providers. It is essential to determine the location of existing assets by obtaining plans and proving the exact location before excavating.

Asset owners may have formal agreements in place describing how work shall be undertaken near each other's assets and these shall be complied with.

7.3.1 Obligations of asset owners and contractors

There is an obligation for all asset owners, contractors and service providers to observe the specifications and separation distances indicated in the Streets Opening Conference diagrams (see Section 13) or those agreed through consultation between asset owners.

All contractors should notify the relevant asset owners if they locate any asset that is not shown accurately on the plans. At no time may an asset be relocated or moved without the prior authority of the asset owner.

7.4 DOCUMENTED SYSTEMS OF WORK

A documented **risk assessment** developed in consultation with those supervising and undertaking the activity is necessary for all activities where excavation and inadvertent contact with underground assets may occur.

A **SWMS** is to be developed in accordance with the OHS Regulation which captures details of the risk assessment and the required training/qualification. All those workers undertaking the activities identified in the SWMS should be made aware prior to commencement of work (eg toolbox talk).

An **excavation permit** is an excellent method of managing the investigation and approval process leading up to the commencement of the excavation. A properly constructed permit will produce a rigorous process that must be followed and completed prior to excavation activities and includes the positive identification of underground assets.

Verification activities such as **audit and inspection** are an excellent means of ensuring that the process has been correctly implemented at a systems level and on the ground before and during the excavation activity.

7.5 TRAINING OF MANAGERS AND EMPLOYEES

Training is an integral component of reducing the risk of inadvertent contact with underground assets.

Managers and supervisors need to be made aware of the hazards and overarching requirements regarding inadvertent contact with underground assets such that they are able to implement safe systems of work and properly plan for and oversee the activities.

Both managers/supervisors and employees will benefit from information and training regarding the use of electronic detection devices, how to use the 'Dial Before You Dig' service and how to read plans supplied by the asset owners and/or 'Dial Before You Dig'.

Employees need to be made aware of the systems in place to minimise the risk of inadvertent contact with underground assets and also the hazards facing them if these systems are not employed.

Site-specific induction systems should include details such as the known location of assets, the site safety rules in relation to excavations (eg no excavations without a permit) and provide inductees access to, or a copy of, the utilities location plan for the work zone.

7.6 ASSET OWNER PLANS AND 'DIAL BEFORE YOU DIG'

A site meeting with the asset owners may be required to determine location/s and procedures for dealing with assets within the scope of work. This issue should be addressed during initial project development to provide time to establish a regime to manage any risks.

Before commencing any excavation work, reference shall be made to the details or plans of the utility or private assets in the proposed excavation area as well as a site inspection to identify any unmarked assets. Plans illustrating the location of known underground assets can be obtained from individual asset owners or the 'Dial Before You Dig' service.

As mentioned, the location of underground assets provided by a service or utility provider may not be accurate for many reasons. As complete accuracy cannot be guaranteed, the position of underground assets must be proven by hand excavation, pot-holing or other approved techniques.

For work in the vicinity of EHV electricity transmission cables it is mandatory to have a meeting with the asset owner prior to any work commencing.

7.7 CABLE/PIPE IDENTIFICATION DEVICES

An electronic pipe or cable locator should be used to more accurately identify the location of the underground asset – as asset owners' plans will not provide exact locations.

Once identified using such electronic device, care should be taken to mark the location of the underground asset on the ground's surface.

7.8 GROUND PENETRATING RADAR (GPR)

Ground penetrating radar (GPR) is emerging within the civil construction industry as an excellent tool for identifying underground assets and mapping assets on a wider scale.

GPR is a non destructive and non invasive technique for rapidly imaging the shallow surface (up to 10 m) and produces high resolution colour section in real time. Parallel images can be used to create a 3D image.

7.9 POT-HOLING

Pot-holing is the use of hand tools to excavate to a pre-determined depth to establish if assets exist in the immediate location. Pot-holing is a proven method of identifying assets.

Never assume that underground assets are positioned in the location as depicted on the plans or in the depth suggested. All underground assets should be positively identified prior to commencing excavation.

Pot-holing should be undertaken along the length of the proposed excavation to identify the path of underground assets and their depth. The information contained on the asset owner's plans and gathered during electronic identification methods helps in this process.

- careful digging (ie pot-holing) is the only sure way to identify the depth and alignment of underground pipes and cables
- pot-holing must be undertaken with reference to plans and other information provided by pipe and cable owners.

The amount of pot-holing should be determined with reference to the risk assessment for the site. Excavators should also pay attention to pot-holing requirements included in work practices provided with the network plans and onsite by a representative of the pipe and cable owner.

7.10 AIR AND WATER LANCING

Air/water lancing techniques may be used in some circumstances, but the advantage of these needs to be assessed against any inherent safety and environmental risks, eg dust generation, contaminated water runoff and possible damage to underground assets.

7.11 TRENCHLESS TECHNIQUES

Pot-holing must be used to locate existing underground assets to ensure adequate clearances are maintained between assets and to locate other asset crossings. Pot-holing at each asset crossing and at regular spacing along assets is recommended.

Where high risk assets are identified, consultation with the asset owner is required. Consultation is also required when using directional boring across existing utility lines. Where clearances required by other assets cannot be achieved at the proposed depth of asset installation, alternative solutions should be sought in consultation with the relevant parties.

It is crucial to provide the “as constructed” details on this type of installation for future reference because:

- the ground above the bore is typically undisturbed, not offering any indication of previous works
- of the inability of directionally-bored installations to provide warning tape or mechanical protection above the asset
- the bore may not follow a direct route.

7.12 SAFETY OBSERVERS

Excavation work around underground assets should only be undertaken with the assistance of a competent safety observer.

The safety observer/s should be given sufficient control of the activity to call for a cessation of work in the event of system failure or observation of unsafe practice which may give rise to an inadvertent contact with an underground or overhead asset.

When excavating near or adjacent to underground assets it is important to be aware of overhead hazards such as overhead powerlines. Risk assessment may dictate a requirement for more than one safety observer for such activity, eg one observer to mitigate inadvertent contact with underground hazards and the other to mitigate inadvertent contact with overhead hazards.

7.13 CONFINED SPACES

Excavations are generally not confined spaces. However, confined space provisions may apply to certain excavations where the excavation enters foul or contaminated ground or opens a live sewer. Also, where the atmosphere can be altered by exhaust gases or other contaminants, the excavation is to be treated as a confined space. Further information is given in WorkCover's *Code of Practice: Excavation*, Section 4.

7.14 GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS)

GPS technology provides an excellent opportunity to plot the location of underground assets and maintain that information for the duration of the project. This is especially important in maintenance and long term projects.

GPS locations, when captured, should be noted on relevant plans. This information should also be provided to asset owners for any as built/modified infrastructure or previously unidentified underground assets.

7.15 ABOVE GROUND IDENTIFICATION DEVICES

Previously in this document, many above ground identification devices have been discussed that may assist identifying underground assets.

The Western Sydney Orbital Project (M7) successfully implemented a process where different coloured conduits (according to the nature of the asset) were temporarily inserted into the pot-hole directly onto the underground asset. These conduits, when back filled, extended approximately 1-1.5 metres above the ground and were plugged on top to prevent dirt and debris entering the conduit. These above ground locators enabled easy visual identification of the path of known underground assets and, when a measuring tape was inserted into the conduit, provided the exact depth of the asset.

8. TRAINING, INSTRUCTION AND INFORMATION



The OHS Act requires employers to provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as may be necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees while at work.

In addition, some activities are restricted to persons holding the relevant certificate of competency, for example scaffolding and operation of cranes and some load shifting equipment. See the OHS Regulation or the *Industrial Certification Manual* for a full list of such activities.

8.1 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the requirements of construction training, all persons undertaking work involving underground assets must be instructed, trained and assessed as competent for the tasks they are undertaking.

Training includes but is not limited to:

- induction
- general health and safety induction training
- work activity health and safety induction training
- site specific health and safety induction training (Clause 216 OHS Regulation)
- risk assessment methodology
- training in the use of SWMS
- plan/map reading
- utility specific statutory training.

8.2 INDUCTION TRAINING



The OHS Regulation requires that employees receive OHS induction training, including general health and safety induction training, work activity based induction training and site specific induction training, and that this training covers the topics set out in the *Code of Practice: Occupational Health and Safety Induction Training for Construction Work 1998*. The training must cover the following points:

- arrangements for the management of OHS, including arrangements for reporting hazards to management
- health and safety procedures relevant to the work of the employee, including the use and maintenance of risk control measures
- how to access any health and safety information that the employer is required to make available to each employee
- any other induction training relevant to the place of work (eg confined spaces entry training), having regard to the competence, experience and age of the new employee.

8.3 TRAINING TOPICS

Training should draw on knowledge of the known hazards and risks in your operations, including matters described in this Guideline. The source of risks should be pointed out and the adverse outcomes that have been experienced by others should be used to stress the importance of safety.

The training provided and the instruction given should at least include all safe work methods to be used on the job and matters described in this Guideline, that is, all hazards, risks and control measures for control of hazards.

8.4 WHO SHOULD RECEIVE TRAINING?

The target groups for training at a workplace include but are not limited to:

- managers and supervisors of employees and/or other persons undertaking work considered at risk of injury and/or who have responsibility for implementing safe operating procedures
- OHS committees and OHS representative/s
- staff responsible for the purchasing and maintenance of plant, PPE and for designing, scheduling and organisation of work activities
- persons undertaking risk assessments or preparing SWMS
- employees and subcontractors undertaking the work, including employees of labour hire organisations.

As the needs of each target group are different, the content and methods of presenting training material should be tailored to meet the specific needs of each group.

8.5 PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTION

Information may include:

- the results of any applicable risk assessment
- SWMS
- a review of such a risk assessment and/or SWMS or operating procedure
- any other relevant OHS information.

Employers should brief each employee as to the contents of risk assessments and SWMS when each employee and/or other person first begins to perform tunnelling work, at regular intervals thereafter, and whenever there are changes to risk assessments or new information about health and safety risks becomes available.

Employees and other workers should have, on request, ready access to risk assessments and SWMS.

9. CASE STUDIES AND CHECK LISTS

9.1 REPAIRING SEWERAGE PIPES

A reactive dig and repair job was commenced by a work crew of a sewage and drainage authority following the internal surcharge of a sewer line at a preschool adjacent to the worksite. CCTV was used to identify the repair location of the sewer. Damage to the sewer pipes apparently occurred during the laying of electrical conduits approximately 20 years ago and a contractor had carried out a repair of that damage. The repairs appear not to have been referred back to the responsible sewerage authority and eventually resulted in the internal surcharge at the preschool.

The work crew did not find indicator plates or markers identifying underground power in the immediate area, and, because locating equipment was not readily available, made a decision not to delay the work and to commence excavating with a mechanical excavator. The excavator uncovered bricks marking an electricity asset directly over a conduit. Marker tape was found but was not immediately obvious.

An incident was declared by the work crew and work stopped when the conduits were uncovered. The asset owner was called to the site and supervised the remainder of the repairs. An insulated spud bar was used to break up concrete that was placed around the pipe in the original repair. The pipe was replaced, work completed and the excavation backfilled. The incident was reported as a near miss.



The hazards shown here include a broken sewer pipe and high voltage cables.

The risks were electric shock, contaminated and hazardous atmosphere (from sewer gases) and possible infection.

Failure to identify the presence of these cables before work commenced exposed the workers to the risk to health and safety.

Once the risk was identified, the controls included the use of insulated tools to excavate under the supervision of an authorised person from the asset owner.

9.2 COUNTRY TELECOMMUNICATIONS CABLE DAMAGE CASE STUDY



At this location, a contractor working for a telecommunication carrier performing combined pre-ripping and plough operation to install new optic fibre cable, damaged the Telstra major interstate fibre cables.

The new route was being installed through rural paddocks and properties by D7 dozer and trenching machinery. The route was being installed parallel to the existing Telstra major fibre route.

At the manhole, approx 20 metres from the damage location, a 30 fibre cable, 16 fibre cable and a 30 pair copper cable left the manhole at right angles following the fence line. The contractor failed to identify the break off from the manhole shown on the plans. These cables were subsequently damaged during the pre-ripping procedure near the fence line.

The contractor believed the main cables were in another location, the one they had been following, and they had not noticed the manhole (located approximately 20-30 metres from the pre-ripping process) until after the damage had occurred. Two markers on either side of the manhole were clearly visible from a distance.

Site observations

- The Telstra fibre cable route was clearly marked with Telstra yellow concrete markers, which was easily visible.
- The manhole was marked with a yellow concrete marker post at either end of the manhole.
- The cable route was clearly shown on Telstra plans that the contractor obtained from the 'Dial Before You Dig' service.
- There was no visible sign of asset location (pot-holing) on the ground such as markers, paint, peg lines, markings on the ground etc.
- There were deficiencies with the safe system of work used on the project.

9.3 CITY TELECOMMUNICATIONS CABLE DAMAGE CASE STUDY

A contractor in the west of Sydney drilling pier holes for the construction of townhouses caused significant damage to telecommunication cables resulting in severe disruption to telecommunication services in country NSW.

An auger operated by an excavation contractor made a direct hit on a telecommunications cable route. Thousands of telephone lines, mobile phone towers, EFTPOS terminals and data lines went dead all over NSW instantly.

The auger, a giant drill, severed six fibre optic cables running between 12 and 60 fibres each and a 2400 copper pair cable, about seven kilometres from the Parramatta exchange.

Physical cable damage was not confined to the one hole in the ground – it wrenched and ripped cables clean out of manholes for hundreds of metres on either side.

One of the cables was the main feed to the Bathurst and Orange area, others carried mobile phone traffic. Almost all the copper lines were in use by local households and businesses and, not least of all, the main ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) internet backbone running to the south and west out of Sydney. At one ISP alone, more than 100,000 customers across four states were unable to log on to the internet for hours. Also 250,000 Foxtel service subscribers were disconnected, some for nearly 12 hours.

It was not just the phone services that went down. EFTPOS services died, and staff from a Bathurst supermarket were reduced to hunting around other businesses for manual transfer forms for more than a day so customers could buy groceries and debit their bank accounts. E-mail access in Bathurst was out too.

Had the 'Dial Before You Dig' service been contacted on 1100 and the appropriate plans used, the damage could have been avoided.

If there is any doubt at all about cable location, Telstra will send staff to show contractors and property owners how to check for stray lines. However, there was no call placed to the 1100 service for this damage.

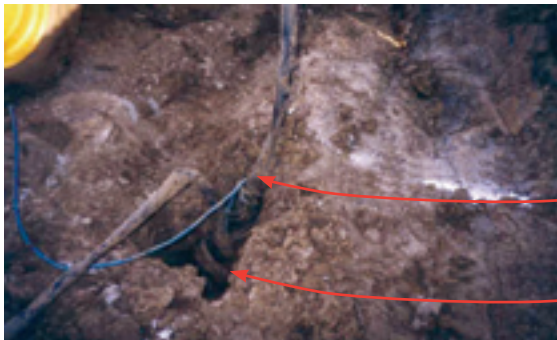
When people in west Sydney picked up their phones and found no signal, they might have expected their mobiles or other carrier services to fill the gap. But Telstra, Optus, AAPT, Vodafone and Primus were all affected to some extent.

This incident was the cable cut of all cable cuts, but cut and flooded cables take down parts of the telephone and data network every day.

It took 50 technicians until 11.00 that night just to restore all the services, and two-and-a-half days to finish all the work.



Sub-ducts and cables laying on the construction site, pulled out by an auger.



Twisted sub-ducts and optical fibre.

One of the bored holes where the cables and conduits had been pulled out.



Twisted sub-ducts and optical fibre.

Through these bored holes large amounts of cables and sub-ducts had been pulled out. Thus, causing major damage to cables and joints in the Telstra Network.

9.4 EXAMPLE OF AN INCIDENT REPORT USED BY AN ELECTRICITY ASSET OWNER

'Excavator operator injured when hitting 11,000 volt underground cable'

Date:	07/10/05
Incident occurred at a place of work (refer OHS Act 2000)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (Construction site)
System voltage involved:	11,000 kV
Address:	Northumberland Road
Work being done for:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contestable work done for customer
Category:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General public (workers – non networks worker)
Category type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electric shock
Treatment:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical treatment given (Hospital)
Description of injuries:	Excavating for ASP to relocate 11,000 volt UG cables, excavator hit cable causing explosion and feeder trip. Victim received shock from excavator and was taken to hospital for check up. No permanent injuries
Network element involved in incident:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Underground mains
Object involved in incident:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excavator
Location of incident:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban
Location type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Roadway (including footpaths to property boundary)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accident area exposed to weather (ie outdoors)
Possible causes of incident:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Failure to follow written procedures
Briefly describe possible causes of incident in more detail:	Workers had located cable via searches but proceeded to dig with excavator beyond marker tape and hit cable
Initial corrective action:	ASP and excavator operator advised of the dangers associated with excavation near cables. Advised that any work beyond covers or marker tapes can only be done using hand tools
Corrective action taken:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> excavator operator advised of his responsibilities when working near underground assets ASP reminded of his responsibilities in regard to site supervision and the need to consult plans before commencing any excavation work
Follow up:	Cable isolated and repaired by IE. 50 customers interrupted for 5.2 hours

9.5 CASE STUDY: CONSTRUCTION OF THE M7 MOTORWAY

The Abi Leighton Joint Venture (ALJV) conducted an extensive risk assessment before commencing on the project and services both above and below the ground were identified as a major risk.

The ALJV consulted with the asset owners who identified an extensive number of assets in the M7 corridor and local road upgrades.

Plans were obtained from 'Dial Before You Dig' and from the asset owner. Electronic services detection was also conducted. These assets were then surveyed and non-destructive digging conducted to positively identify each asset. Colour coded conduits were then placed on top of the assets.

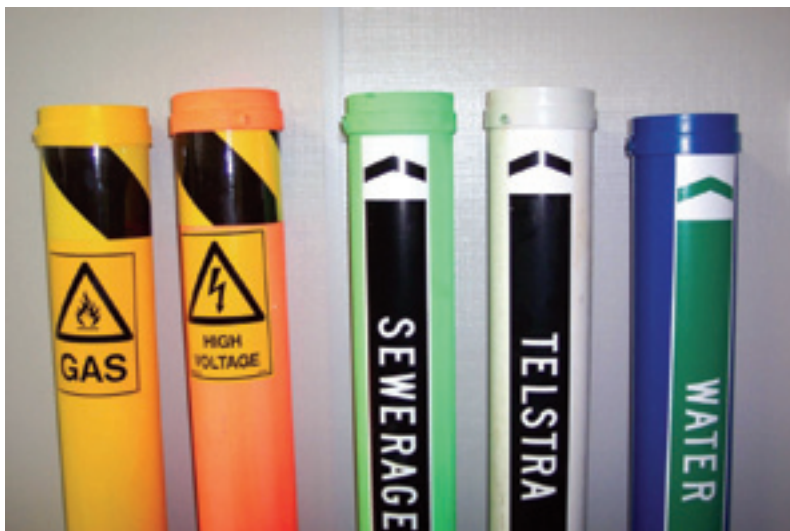
The ALJV still recorded hits to the assets as not all assets were identified on the plans or by 'Dial Before You Dig'.

Meetings were arranged by the ALJV with management and field staff, asset owners, subcontractors and 'Dial Before You Dig'. From these meetings the ALJV developed the following procedures through consultation to reduce the possibility of impacting on these assets:

- a request to de-energize high risk electrical assets where possible was made to the asset owner. A training course was developed and delivered by the ALJV and Integral Energy to approximately 500 ALJV and subcontractor employees on the project
- permits to excavate and work around assets were reviewed and developed with input from all stakeholders. The mandatory exclusion zones for underground assets were doubled
- colour coded conduits were used to identify the type of asset, location and depth
- when working in the asset zones, only toothless buckets were permitted to be used on plant
- banners, posters, stickers and signage were extensively used to remind all personnel of the procedures.

The ALJV, in consultation with a manufacturer, developed a GPS backpack to identify a known asset by comparing it to the ALJV survey database. This allows the ALJV to mark out existing assets and make this information more accessible and easier to understand.

By consulting and training all stakeholders, the ALJV was able to implement safe work methods and dramatically reduce the number of incidents impacting on assets.



Colour Coded Conduits used to identify assets



Manufacturer's backpack being used by ALJV survey staff



The manufacturer's pocket PC allows quick recognition of underground assets by touch screen technology. This identifies the type of asset and its approximate location.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

10.1 AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS

- AS 2648.1 *Underground marking tape*
- AS 4026 *Electrical cables for underground residential systems*
- AS 1345 *Identification of the contents of pipes, conduits and ducts*
- AS 2566.2 *Buried flexible pipelines*
- AS 4271 *Interim – Geographic information data dictionary*
- AS 1742.3 *Traffic control devices for works on roads*
- AS/NZS 4360 *Risk management*
- AS 4799 *Installation of underground utility services and pipelines within railway boundaries*
- AS 4292.1 *Railway safety management*
- AS 2865:2001 *Safe working in a confined space*
- AS 1165 *Traffic hazard warning lamps*
- AS 1345:1995 *Identification of the contents of pipes, conduits and ducts*
- AS 1742.3 *Traffic control devices for works on roads*
- AS 1743 *Road signs – specifications*
- AS 1744 *Forms of letters and numerals for road signs*
- AS 1906 *Retroreflective materials and devices for road traffic control purposes*
- AS HB81 *Field guide for traffic control at works on roads:*
 - (HB81.1 Short term urban works – daytime only
 - HB81.2 Short term rural works – daytime only
 - HB81.3 Mobile works
 - HB81.4 Short term night works
 - HB81.5 Works on unsealed roads
 - HB81.6 Bituminous surfacing)

Australian Standards are available from SAI Global www.saiglobal.com/shop
email sales@sai-global.com or phone 13 12 42.

10.2 WORKCOVER NSW CODES OF PRACTICE

- *Code of Practice: Work Near Overhead Power Lines*
- *Code of Practice: Excavation*
- *Code of Practice: Moving Plant on Construction Sites.*

10.3 OTHER STANDARDS AND REFERENCES

- Streets Opening Conference (2007) *Guide To Codes and Practices for Streets Opening*
- Streets Opening Conference (1999) *Model Agreement for Local Councils and Utility Service Providers*
- *Service and Installation Rules of New South Wales* (2006)
- AUS-SPEC 306U AUS-SPEC *Road Openings and Restoration* (2004 and earlier additions)
- AUS – SPEC 7200 C0219 *Construction – Roadways – Road openings and restorations for utilities* (2007).

For Streets Opening Conference enquiries, contact The Secretariat, Institute of Public Works, Engineering Australia (NSW Division)

Phone 02 9267 6677 Fax 02 9283 5255 email ipwea@ipwea.org.au

For AUS-SPEC enquiries contact: Manager Specifications, Standards Australia, 286 Sussex Street Sydney NSW 2000. GPO Box 476 Sydney NSW 2001

Phone 02 8206 6713 Fax 02 8206 6021 email aus-spec@standards.org.au

10.4 LEGISLATION

- *Electricity Supply Act 1995*
- *Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2004*
- *Gas Supply Act 1996*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*
- *Pipelines Act 1967*
- *Sydney Water Act 1994*
- *Hunter Water Act 1991*
- *Roads Act 1993 and Road Regulations 1994 (as amended)*
- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997*
- *Telecommunications Act 1997.*

11. APPENDIX A – UNDERGROUND ASSET LOCATION CHECKLIST

Worksite location: _____

(street name, cross street, landmarks)

Plans provided by: Dial Before You Dig ☐ Yes ☐ No Contractor ☐ Yes ☐ No
Asset owner ☐ Yes ☐ No

Underground assets located:

Utility (Note Utility from which plans were obtained)	Plans received as per dial before you dig information	Plans current Check dates	Plans indicate assets in vicinity	Assets checked	Pot-holing req'd	Pot-holing done	Stand-by req'd	Site marking completed	(sketch on rear of sheet)
	✓	✓	✓	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	✓	Y/N	Y/N
Communications									
Electrical									
Water									
Sewerage									
Gas									
Other									
Other									

Sketch worksite and Utility locations on reverse side of page

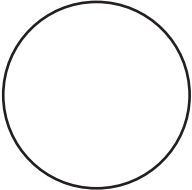
Additional Comments:


Plans verified and confirm all assets as located? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Person locating asset	Person carrying out work
Signed	Signed
Name (Print) Business Name	Name (Print)
Date completed checks/...../.....	Date received checked results/...../..... Completed Checklist and Utility Plans included in job-pack. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Underground Asset Location Checklist – SAMPLE ONLY

Diagram of UG Assets as located on site



Indicate the north point with an arrow 

SAMPLE ONLY

Drawn by

Name _____

Sign _____

Date ____ / ____ / ____

The above sketch should contain the following details:

- street alignments (where applicable)
- lot boundaries (where applicable)
- name of street and suburb
- north point
- nearest cross street
- distances from relevant assets/boundaries
- depth of cover (only if available)
- signature and name (drawn by).

12. APPENDIX B – WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE



Anyone who employs workers, and in some cases engages contractors, must maintain a current workers compensation insurance policy. Penalties apply for failing to have a current policy in place.

All employers have a legal liability to pay workers compensation to workers who are injured in the course of their work, and employers are required by law to hold a workers compensation insurance policy from a licensed WorkCover insurer to cover that liability.

For workers compensation insurance purposes the *Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998* (the Act) defines a worker, subject to certain specified exceptions, to mean:

A person who has entered into or works under a contract of service or a training contract with an employer (whether by way of manual labour, clerical work or otherwise, and whether the contract is expressed or implied, and whether the contract is oral or in writing).

In addition, the Act deems certain other persons to be workers for workers compensation purposes, eg some types of contractors.

For assistance in clarifying your obligation, contact your insurer or the WorkCover Assistance Service on **13 10 50**.

13. APPENDIX C – TYPICAL FOOTWAY ALLOCATIONS FOR UTILITY SERVICES AND DEPTH OF COVER IN ROAD RESERVES

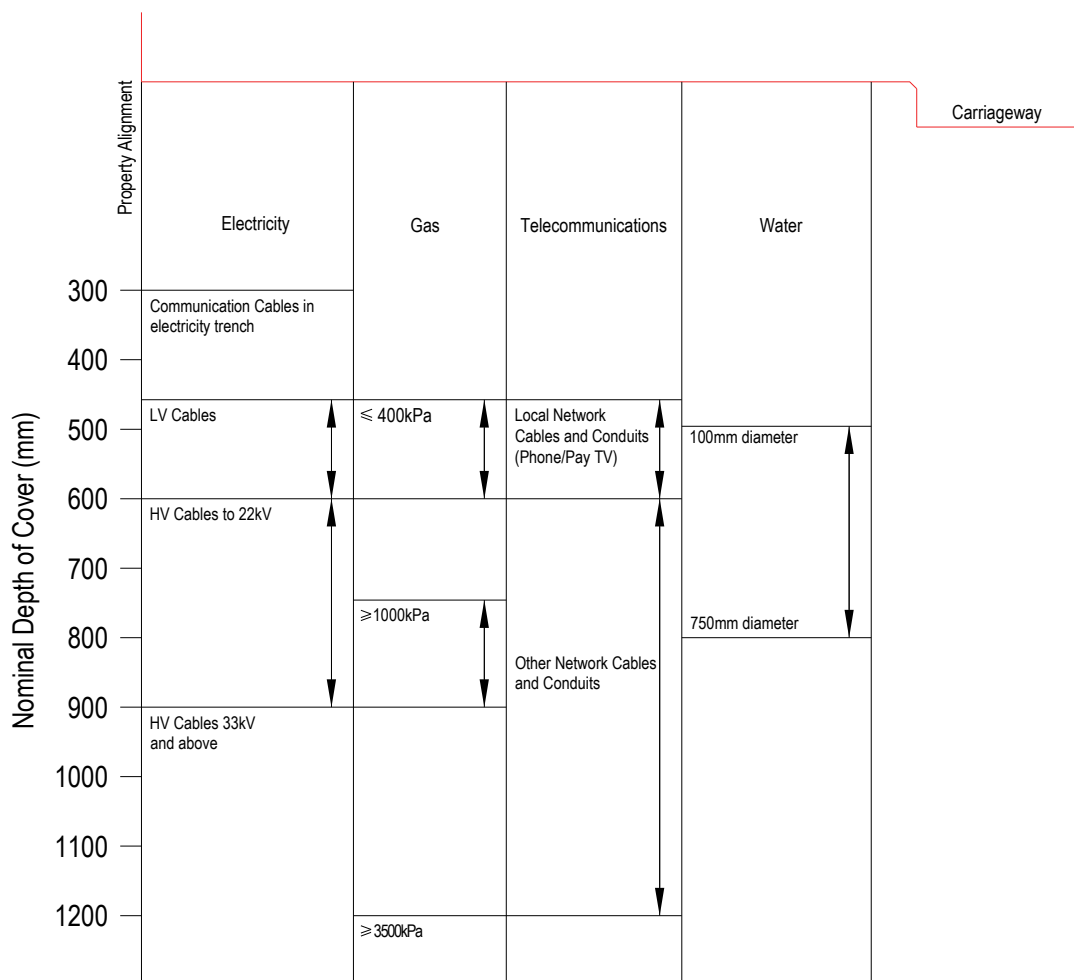
The diagrams in this section have been sourced from the publication entitled *Guide to Codes and Practices for Streets Opening 2007* published by the NSW Streets Opening Conference (SOC). These diagrams are typical examples only, and may not be up-to-date. The current edition of the SOC document should always be consulted prior to undertaking work that impacts on underground services to ensure that the information used is up-to-date.

Source: NSW Streets Opening Conference: Guide to Codes and Practices for Streets Opening 2007

For the purpose of this section, note that sewer lines have not been specifically identified.

13.1 NOMINAL DEPTH OF COVER OF UTILITY SERVICES IN ROAD RESERVES

13.1.1 In footways



Source: NSW Streets Opening Conference: Guide to Codes and Practices for Streets Opening 2007

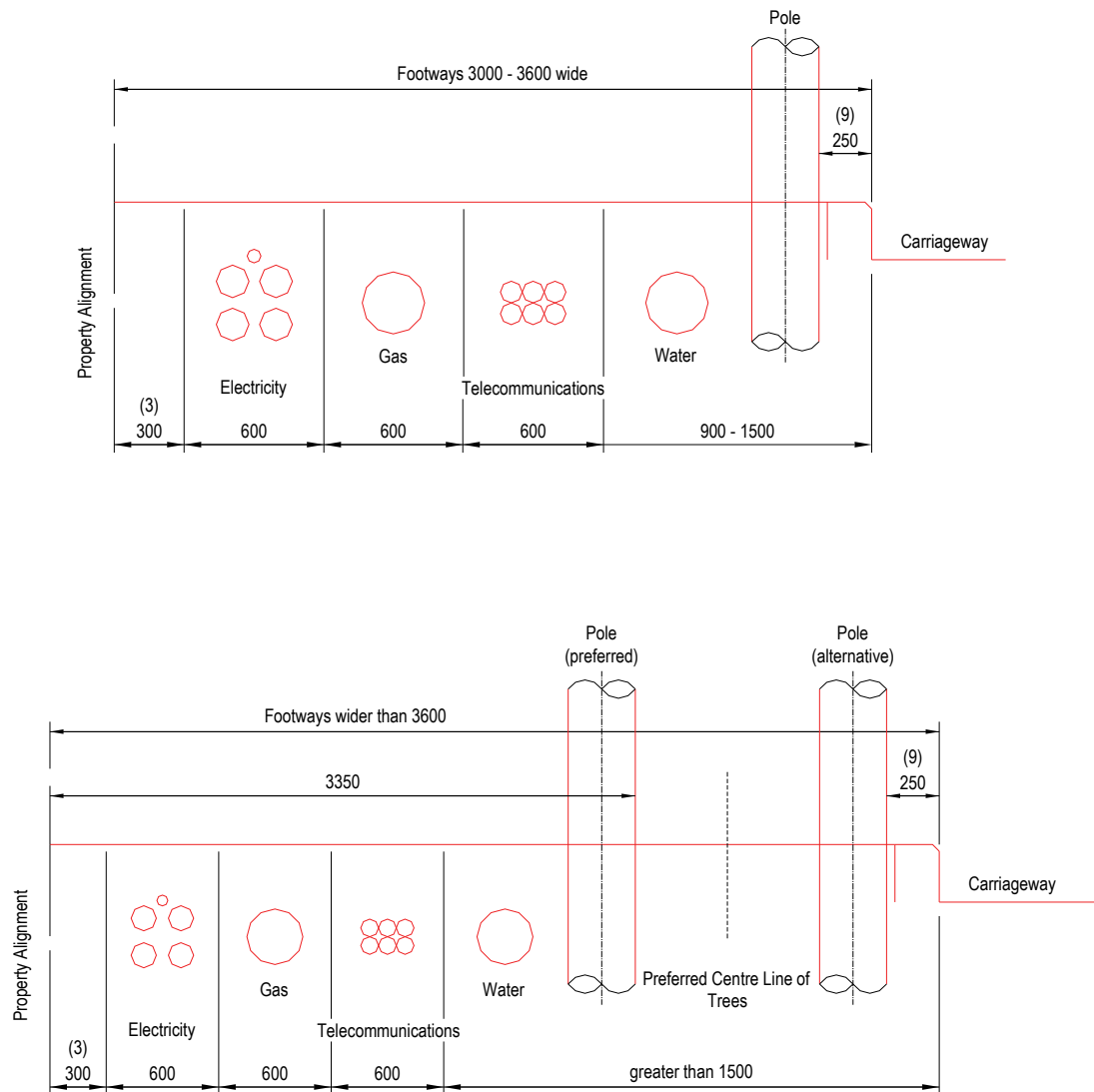
13.1.2 In carriageways

	Electricity	Gas	Telecommunications	Water
300				
400				
500	Communication Cables in electricity trench		Local Network Cables and Conduits (Phone/Pay TV)	
600	LV Cables	$\leq 400\text{kPa}$		100mm diameter
700				
800	HV Cables to 22kV			750mm diameter
900	HV Cables 33kV and above	$\geq 1000\text{kPa}$	Other Network Cables and Conduits	
1000				
1100				
1200		$\geq 3500\text{kPa}$		

Source: NSW Streets Opening Conference: Guide to Codes and Practices for Streets Opening 2007

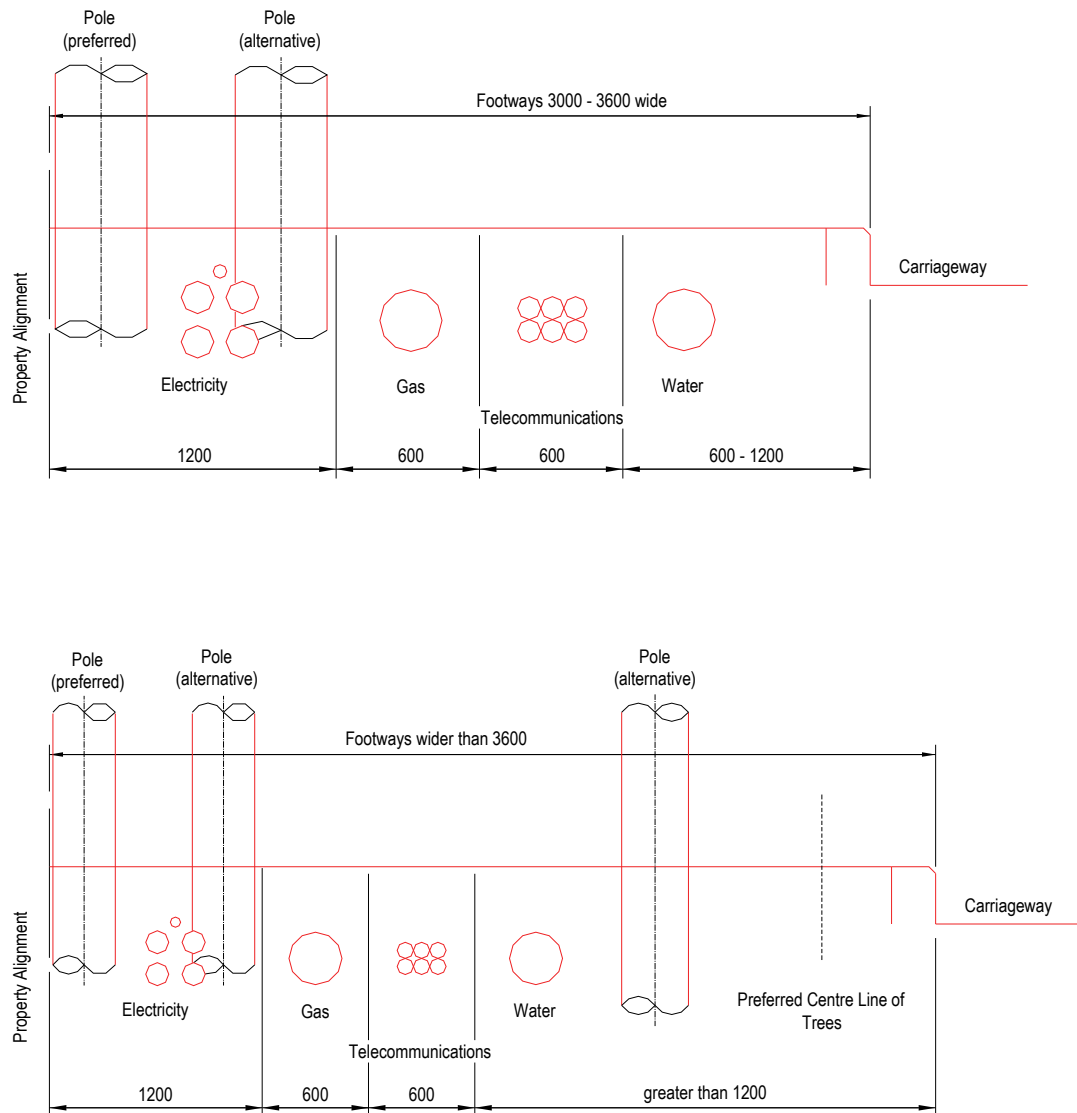
13.2 UTILITY/SERVICE PROVIDER ALLOCATION OF SPACE IN FOOTWAYS

13.2.1 Streets dedicated prior to 1 January 1991



Source: NSW Streets Opening Conference: Guide to Codes and Practices for Streets Opening 2007

13.2.2 Streets dedicated after 1 January 1991



Source: NSW Streets Opening Conference: Guide to Codes and Practices for Streets Opening 2007

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