

Safety Advice

Action required following a serious incident



Safe isolations

Issued to: **All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and accredited contractors**

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Location: National

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Overview

On 25th December 2019 an overhead linesman was seriously injured when he came into contact with the live overhead line equipment (OLE) at Kensal Green. Safety Bulletin NRB19-22 refers.

It is clear that changes are required to the 'Test before Touch' industry practice.

The formal industry investigation has revealed a number of factors which require immediate action to reinforce compliance with isolation planning and testing requirements.

Immediate action required

- The Test before Touch lifesaving rule requires that a test be witnessed or performed every time before touching OLE beyond an inline feature.
- You should not plan staggered isolations unless this is absolutely unavoidable. Where staggered limits are essential, enhanced control measures must be used. Live sections must be clearly identifiable on site.
- Nominated persons must undertake a site or virtual walkout before the isolation to confirm working limits, and to identify electrical residual hazards and control measures, such as flashing blue lights.
- Nominated persons must be competent to carry out this task, and this will need to be checked on their Sentinel cards.
- All residual hazards must be identified on the OLE Permit/Form C including live equipment adjacent, abutting or crossing over earthed equipment.
- Every Nominated Person issuing an OLE Permit/Form C must confirm that the permit holder demonstrates a full understanding of the safe work limits, work to be undertaken, route of travel and the electrical residual hazards stated on the OLE Permit/Form C.
- Where there is a change of person holding the OLE Permit, the permit holder must inform their relief of the working limits, any electrical residual hazards and the control measures detailed in the OLE Permit/Form C.
- Any alternative arrangements for issuing an OLE Permit/Form C must be planned and approved by the relevant Delivery Unit or designated project engineer.