

Vegetation management near OLE

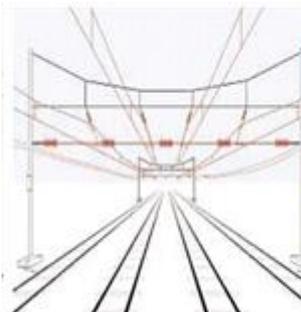
Issued to: **Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and accredited contractors**

Ref: NRB20-08

Date of issue: 23/07/2020

Location: National

Contact: [Linda Penfold](#), Professional Head of Contact Systems AC/DC



Overview

Two recent incidents have highlighted the risk of undertaking vegetation clearance near overhead line equipment (OLE).

On 17 July, during vegetation clearance works at Doncaster Belmont, a member of staff fell backwards injuring their back when the branch they were carrying came in to contact with live OLE. Fortunately they did not sustain any electrical burns.

On 3 June, during vegetation clearance work near St Albans, a member of staff received an electrical shock when a tree branch touched what was thought to be the isolated return conductor. It was subsequently established that the equipment was live and beyond the isolation limits.

Initial investigation found that the Form C showed incorrect isolation limits which were missed both at the planning stage and on site. The two-line railway did not have trains running, but the opportunity for a full isolation was missed.

Discussion Points

- When should you treat OLE as being live and dangerous to life?
- How do you check if vegetation is near the OLE and that you have the ability to remain more than 2.75m away from it?
- What should you do if you realise vegetation has or is likely to encroach near the OLE at any stage of your work?
- What controls must you use to mitigate the risk if any trees are within the 2.75m of the OLE?
- How do you know the limits of an isolation?

When your work involves tools, vegetation or a person potentially being within 2.75m of live OLE, you must follow NR/L3/ELP/29987 Working on or About 25 kV A.C. Electrified Lines and have the correct documentation.

- an approved work activity risk assessment, with an approved task delivery method.
- or a Form C (Overhead Line Permit) that is signed and issued by the nominated person?