

# **SAFETY CRITICAL** **INFORMATION** **FLASH BULLETIN**

**SCI Number:** 23/06

**Date of Issue:** 12 December 2023

**Subject:** Linespersons injured after a pole foundation fails

**Target Audience:** All Authorised Staff

**Detail:**

We had a serious incident yesterday that has resulted in two Linespersons sustaining serious injuries, both received treatment for their injuries by the emergency services and have been taken to hospital. An inquiry has been established to find out exactly what happened, but we know at this point that the pole fell with both persons positioned at the top of the pole whilst removing conductors. We wish both a fast and full recovery.



**Actions:**

- Before climbing complete all checks as per **SRI 21 and Policy Document 6/028**. Discuss these as a team and agree your work methods and any additional equipment to complete the required task. These are summarised below.
- Carry out visual inspection of the pole looking for decay, defective pole top fittings/apparatus and any yellow 'S' or red 'D' labels.
- Check the foundation depth, if there is no birth mark visible the pole must be supported before any conductor and/or stay is released.
- Check the ground conditions which are supporting the pole foundation, pay particular attention to sheughs or streams, water logged and soft or boggy ground, also remember a pole hole recently backfilled may not be as fully compacted as established poles.
- Carry out your hammer and probe test at ground level, continue with the hammer test as you climb the pole.
- If the assessment above carried out by a Linesperson determines that the pole is unsafe to climb then one or more of the following methods must be employed to prevent the pole breaking or becoming unstable prior to climbing.
  - a) An excavator fitted with a mechanical pole grab
  - b) Track machine (6 tonne min) with suitable attachments
  - c) Crane Lorry with suitable attachments
  - d) Guy ropes
  - e) Mobile crane with suitable attachments

**Note - All lowering of conductors shall be carried out in a controlled manner and where required temporary stays shall be fitted.**