



20/09/2024

National Grid (UK) Prosecuted for H&S Failures Causing Significant Life-Changing Injuries

WHAT HAPPENED?

This Safety Alert is to advise of a prosecution of National Grid (UK) which reported this month by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This reminder is for the electricity industries worldwide to effectively plan work and the potential consequences where this does not occur.

The injured person (IP) was working replacing step bolts on the pylon in Pontypridd, when he received an electric shock of 33 thousand volts. The 50-year-old sustained burns to 40 per cent of his body, including to his arms and legs, and lost part of his right buttock.

National Grid Electricity Distribution (South Wales) Plc and 4 Power Ltd (a service provider) both received fines in relation to the incident, which happened on 3 December 2020.



The incident happened on 3 December 2020

ACTION TAKEN

4 Power Ltd pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and have been fined £80,000 and ordered to pay costs of £14,123.

National Grid Electricity Distribution (South Wales) Plc pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 14 of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and have been fined £3.2million and ordered to pay costs of £20,460.

ROOT CAUSE

- 4 Power Ltd failed to properly plan and assess the risk. Had this been done, it would have identified that the arms of pylon were too short to do the work safely, while maintaining the specified safety distances as per industry standard.
- National Grid Electricity Distribution (South Wales) Plc failed to ensure that the electricity was off in order to do this work safely on the pylon.

LEARNINGS

- Planning the work - The HSE (GB regulator) for workplace H&S stated, "What is so frustrating in incidents like these is if a safe system of work had been in place before the incident, his injuries would have been prevented."
- Safe System of work - Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information and instruction to workers.

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