

SAFETY ALERT 24/04

Steel pillars – livening hazard.

Critical risk – uncontrolled energy release

BACKGROUND

Steel pillars are gradually being replaced on the network, however several thousand remain. Numerous incidents have occurred over the years, especially with link type pillars, and particular caution is required when opening and working on these.

INCIDENT - Potential harm

When removing the outer cover of a link pillar for replacement, cable jointers found a hole had been burnt through the top of the inner cover. Live wires have been in contact with the top plate and have melted.

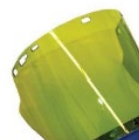
It is most likely this pillar has been live, creating an electrocution/shock risk.

A risk of flash over is also present.



Safe work procedures with steel pillars

- **ALWAYS** - Test the pillar before touching or removing the cover.
- **ALWAYS** - Wear a flash visor and rated gloves (refer PPE standard 70001)
- Where required, isolate the circuit.
- Link pillars are particularly hazardous and additional precautions are required if working on these live. This includes use of cover up gear when working live.
- Refer LV Pillar Replacement Procedure.



This was a very good proactive near miss report on Vault, thank you.

If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

Marty Fox HSW Manager