

Safety Alert

19 December 2025

Orion

SA2415 Critical Risk – Uncontrolled Energy Release - Electricity Operating the Low Voltage Network

What's happened?

A recent near miss event and investigation has highlighted a possible gap in the understanding and application of the Orion Electricity Network Procedures relating to operating the Low Voltage Network.

A contractor removed an Orion Control Tag and closed an LV isolation point. They believed they needed to complete this step to liven the LV panel before the new circuits could be livened.

This was not an authorised item and could have resulted in someone being exposed to live electrical sources.

What failed:

The people involved held competencies to operate the Orion LV Network, but the investigation has highlighted some discrepancies in believed acceptable application of these.

Procedures and forms provided were not followed or completed, livening was carried out using information on the work instruction and LV schematics as a commissioning plan.

A Network approved Operating Order was not implemented on site.

The switching steps to complete the commissioning and livening were agreed verbally between two contractor operators and an Orion control shroud and tag was removed (only an Orion Control issued operating order can authorise this action).

These are significant breaches of Orion safe working procedures and significantly exposed workers to a safety critical risk from uncontrolled electrical energy.



What we're doing:

- Orion Contract Manager working with the Contractor to review and provided support through the investigation and corrective action process
- Issuing this Safety Alert – for information and discussion
- Notifying Orion staff, in particular Connection and Contract Delivery Managers
- Engaging with our service delivery partners to heighten their awareness

For more information contact Orion at info@oriongroup.co.nz or call 0800 363 9898