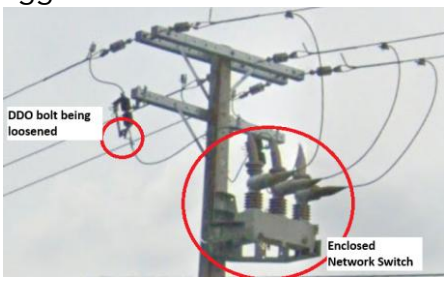
SAFETY ALERT

Voltage Detected on Isolated Enclosed 11kV Switch

Incident	Description	
Date of Event:	04/09/2026	**Location:** Cambridge
Event Description:	During live-line work to remove burnt-out 300A solid-link DDOs on an enclosed 11kV switch, voltage was detected on the load side of the switch even though it was open, locked and tagged.  While loosening a bolt to disconnect the bottom side of the DDOs, workers heard a small arcing sound. A proximity tester subsequently indicated voltage on equipment believed to be de-energised.	
Actions taken:	• A decision was made to cut away all equipment and remove it from the structure. • Subsequent HIPOT testing of the switch in the depot confirmed that in the open position, voltage is still detected in the load side of the switch. • Findings were shared with the switch manufacturer for third-party verification.	
Contributing Factors:	• Induced voltage readings under floating conditions are an expected characteristic of the RVD design. • Due to use of live-line techniques, no voltage testing or earthing was used.	
Corrective Actions:	• Review and update internal live-line procedures with workers to ensure this equipment characteristic is known and documented. • Reinforce with workers the importance of ensuring a visual break, or applying earths at enclosed switches when they are used as part of an access permit.	
Lessons Learnt:	Unexpected voltage indications can occur due to equipment design characteristics and circuit conditions. Regardless of the likely cause, any unexpected indication should be treated seriously and investigated before work continues. Where uncertainty exists, workers should escalate the issue and obtain technical advice to confirm the condition of the equipment.	
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