



Working, Testing or Switching at Cut-outs

Over the past year there have been several incidents where cut-outs have catastrophically failed. Some of these incidents occurred whilst testing, switching or during other work. These incidents occurred in other DNOs as well as our own. A recent incident highlights once again the further requirement to comply with company instructions and to ensure the **APPROPRIATE** PPE is selected during your Risk Assessment for the task at hand.

An example incident from another DNO, occurred during a fault investigation. The team carrying out the task consisted of two jointers; one experienced and a newly qualified jointer. As there was a clear area around the cut-out, they made a decision that the newly qualified jointer would complete the cut-out change to help him gain experience. The work was undertaken with the incoming supply live which **WAS NOT** in accordance with the DNO's live working procedures.

The important thing to note from this incident is that, although they were not following the correct procedures, the Jointer carrying out the task had chosen to wear the highest level of PPE available to him. The attached pictures of his PPE after the failure of the cut-out demonstrates the protection afforded to the Jointer. In this case the last line of defence given the organisations live working procedure was not followed.



Insulated Gloves post incident



Full face Visor post incident

Recommendations and action points

- Ensure the intended live working is necessary and covered by a Live Working Procedure, if not, the option to make "not live" is always available. (e.g. live cut of service cable outside building)
- Make certain you understand and follow SPEN's procedures for carrying out live working activities as in the Live Working Manual. If you are in any doubt **STOP** and seek assistance.
- During your risk assessment always select the highest level of PPE that is practical for carrying out the task. The minimum PPE for switching at a cut-out being; FR Coveralls, insulated gloves and light eye protection. Wear a full face visor if reasonable and practicable to do so.
- Challenge anyone who is not complying with company procedures, not wearing correct PPE or wearing PPE incorrectly.