



Vegetation Contractor Fall from Height

On the 7th September 2020 at approximately 10:45 a vegetation contractor working for SPEN in the SP Manweb licence area fell approximately 10 metres from a tree he had been working in.

Emergency services were called and the injured person (IP) received first aid on site from his colleagues. He was air-lifted to hospital and was later found to have suffered a broken arm and four fractured vertebrae in his back.

The IP, a fully qualified and authorised arborist, was working with a team of authorised cutters to clear vegetation around a live low voltage insulated overhead line. All work was being carried out in accordance with the live working procedure "Working on Trees Adjacent to Live Overhead Lines" [OPSAF-12-018](#).

The IP had been using two climbing systems to ascend the tree and carry out the cutting work. While descending the tree after completing the work, the two systems the climber was using for anchor points became detached from his harness resulting in the fall.

The contracting company is undertaking an investigation.



Injured person fell approximately 10 metres



All climbers must have two points of attachment at all times

Recommendations and action points

- All persons carrying out tree climbing operations must follow [HSE document AFAG401](#) 'Tree-climbing Operations'
- Climbers must be securely attached to two anchor points at all times
- Ensure all working at height equipment is checked before use and is being used correctly as per manufacturer's guidance
- All staff must be trained and competent on the use of mechanical devices for climbing operations