



MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND UTILITIES

# ***ELECTRICAL***

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*For circulation to Key Safety Personnel and  
workplace notice boards.*

# ***SAFETY***

**ESAA 20/2002**

## **FLASH BURNS RECEIVED INSTALLING UNDERGROUND SERVICE MAINS**

*Accredited Service Providers must fulfil their obligations as an employer and ensure staff work within the limits of their authorisations.*

### **PRELIMINARY ACCIDENT DETAILS**

An electrical accident has occurred whilst an apprentice working for a Level 2 Accredited Service Provider (ASP), was preparing underground service mains for connection to a pillar. It appears as though the apprentice pulled the mains cable through the pillar base and was preparing the cable for connection. While performing this or a related task an electrical flash occurred. This flash caused burns to the apprentice and extensive damage to the pillar and cables.

### **CAUSES**

The causes are still being investigated by WorkCover and the Ministry, and are not fully established at the date of this Bulletin. However, it appears that:

- The ASP did not employ staff authorised by the distributor to undertake this category of work;
- The apprentice was not authorised by the distributor for any category of work; and
- The ASP was not on site when the accident occurred.

### **REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

Accredited Service Providers are reminded that, in accordance with requirements of the *Electricity Supply (Safety Plans) Regulation 1997*, specific local electricity distributor authorisation is essential and required for each category of work performed on or near the electricity network.

***Please turn over for required action and contact details for further information***

## REQUIRED ACTION

**Accredited Service Providers** and **Distributors** are reminded of their obligations under the Safety Plans Regulation to ensure that all network workers are appropriately qualified and explicitly authorised for each category of work in each distribution area when working on or near the electricity network.

Accredited Service Providers must ensure that:

- They fulfil the requirements of their accreditation and authorisation, including working in accordance with the relevant safety and operating plan of the authorising distributor;
- Staff perform effective written, pre-work, hazard and risk assessments;
- They comply with WorkCover's OHS requirements, particularly in relation to the new OHS Regulation 2001, which requires employers to provide reasonable supervision of staff taking into account the competence, experience and age of each employee.
- All staff operate within the boundaries of accreditation and individual authorisations.
- Only staff explicitly authorised for each category of work by the local electricity distributor are permitted to work on or near the electricity network.

The Ministry of Energy and Utilities in its capacity as the accrediting body has taken action against the Accredited Service Provider involved in the accident, to ensure that breaches of Regulations and Accreditation conditions will not recur.

For further information please contact:

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