



Safety Advice 09-2004 (NZ)

CRANE CONTACTING ENERGISED OVERHEAD LINE (FATALITY)

In February 2004, a work crew were replacing pi pole structure under de energised conditions.

A man cage connected to the auxiliary hoist on the end of a fly jib of a 20 tonne rough terrain crane was used to access the structure to remove the conductors. The crane took up the load of the complete structure on the main hoist whilst a crew member cut the two old poles off at ground level using a chainsaw. The men were no longer in the man cage by this time. The crane then lifted the poles clear of the conductors and slewed them to a pre-agreed lay down area perpendicular to the line and behind the crane.

As the structure was being lowered to the ground, the crane operator luffed the boom down and the auxiliary hoist rope with the man cage attached came into contact with the energised 50kV transmission line which ran parallel (at 30m spacing) with the de energised line being worked on. The crew had failed to consider the energised line was a hazard, noting that it was located higher up the hillside than the 110Kv line and so may have initially appeared further away.

One of the crew members is believed to have been touching the crane outrigger at the time of contact and received a fatal electric shock.

Further details will be circulated as soon as they become available.