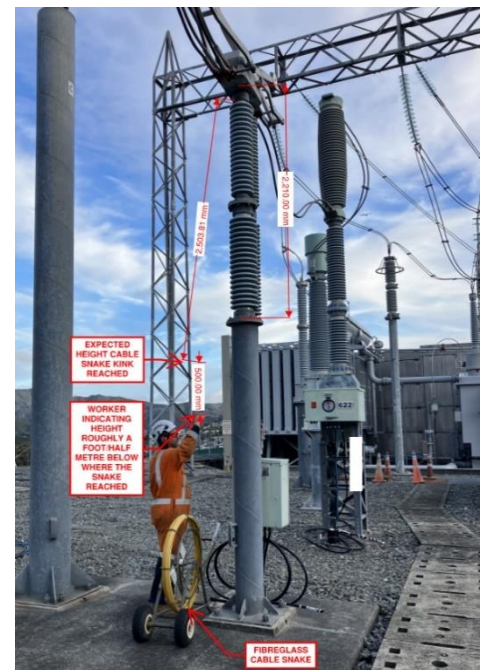




Cable Snake MAD Near Miss

Background:

- A team were installing cables into buried conduit. A fibreglass cable snake was being used as a draw wire, which got stuck in a section of the conduit. A worker in an intermediate pull pit (away from the reel) began pulling back on the cable snake to clear the blockage.
- The cable snake doesn't automatically wind itself back onto its reel. An acute bend/belly developed in the cable snake at the reel end, and the kink started to rise vertically into the air. This continued until it reached 30-50cm above head height while under a live 220kV disconnector.
- The workers noticed the hazard and called to immediately halt pulling on the snake and to reverse direction, bringing the kink back down to ground level. Workers were not at risk to stored or inducted energy in the cable snake, however the risk of encroaching the live 220kV minimum approach distance (MAD).
- It is estimated that the cable snake reached a distance 2.5m away from a live 220kV conductor. Minimum approach distance for a 220kV conductor is 2.2m for a competent worker.



Location of Incident

Immediate actions

- The Hazard was spotted and the team immediately mitigated the hazard by pushing the cable snake back down the conduit to bring the belly down to ground level.
- Transpower and the management team were notified of the near miss.
- Investigation concluded with recommended actions to share near miss event via a safety alert and toolbox discussions.

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