



Safety Advice 41-2013 (Nov) (NZ)

The following Safety Alert courtesy of Vector concerns a switching equipment malfunction and internal arc fault with explosion. The ABB Safelink Switch equipment involved in this switching incident was one of a series manufactured between 1 April 2004 and 31 December 2004. The Safety Alert below outlines immediate actions taken by Vector. The EEA will provide supplementary advice as any post-investigation information becomes available.

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What Happened?

On the morning of Thursday 7 November an ABB SafeLink Switch - one of a number of ABB SafeLink switches manufactured between 1 April 2004 and 31 December 2004 - malfunctioned.

The malfunction occurred when the switch was switched from the ON to OFF position and allowed the switch to overshoot the OFF position. When this occurred the overshoot brought the moving contacts close to the fixed EARTH contacts, which caused an arc to be initiated and develop into an internal arc fault.

The pressure resulting from the explosion was vented from the switch as designed, and the technician involved was not injured.

What has been done to fix the problem?

The switch was replaced with another model.

What will happen next?

Until further notice the isolator should not be *opened* whilst the switch is live. An investigation is now underway.

We are sourcing SafeLink Handle Arrestors from ABB, which will be attached to these switch units to prevent this situation from recurring. These devices will be available at all locations where these switches are located. In the longer term these switch units will be replaced.

In the meantime, this incident serves as a timely reminder (particularly with summer coming up) for the need to ensure that full PPE (switching jacket and visor etc.) must be worn when switching.

Contact

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Vector Ltd assumes no responsibility for action taken by external parties in relation to the content of this Alert