



Safety Alert

Contact with Overhead Line Equipment

20 May 2021

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by
Highways England's supply chain partner:

Balfour Beatty

SAFETY ALERT

2021/UK/SA/001
17 May 2021

Contact with Overhead Line Equipment (OLE)

Overview:

On 14 May, a technician working in a mobile elevated work platform (MEWP) basket came into contact with, or with an arc from, live overhead line equipment (OLE). He suffered serious injuries and is now in hospital. The MEWP operator also sustained a minor injury requiring hospital treatment and has now been discharged. The team were undertaking routine planned work on overhead line adjustments for the Central Rail System Alliance.

An investigation has begun and is currently being led by the British Transport Police and Network Rail. We are co-operating with them, and with the Office of Rail and Road regulator, as we investigate the circumstances of the incident.

Our thoughts are with the injured party who remains in hospital, their family, and those who have been affected, and Balfour Beatty is doing everything possible to support those involved.

In advance of the investigation, we should use this event to remind ourselves:

- Test before touch - A reminder of the Balfour Beatty Life Saving Rule, please make sure and test isolated equipment before touching it.
- Isolation Limits - Please make sure you are clear on the limits of isolation. If anyone is unclear of those limits given during the pre-work brief, they must speak up.
- Retest if you move beyond any inline OLE feature, move to different track or work on a different conductor.
- Remember our four Golden Rules.

Action required:

Please share this safety alert with your site teams, and use the following prompts to discuss the incident:

- How do you clearly identify/mark the limits of worksite and isolations?
- How do you reach a clear and common understanding with others regarding the limits of the worksite and isolation?
- How and where do you test before you touch electrification assets?
- How do you safely stop work if anything has changed?
- Have you got the right Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)? Arc Flash or flame-retardant PPE may be appropriate. Please speak to your supervisor if you are unsure.

Heather Bryant
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