



# Safety Alert

## RIDDOR Injury. Skills, Competencies and Supervision

19 January 2023

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by:

**Amey**

# HEALTH AND SAFETY ALERT

## TITLE

RIDDOR Injury. Skills, competencies and supervision

## TARGET AUDIENCE

National Highways and its supply chain

## DATE ISSUED

09<sup>th</sup> December 2022

## CONTEXT

How we put people safely to work is a key focus for all safety leaders across our industry. We must ensure that our people are fully qualified, competent, briefed and supervised on how to carry out their duties safely.

We have had an incident recently where an apprentice received a 240-volt electric shock while removing a fuse from a street lighting column – a task for which he did not yet have the required skills, knowledge, experience or training.

## CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE ACCIDENT

### The event

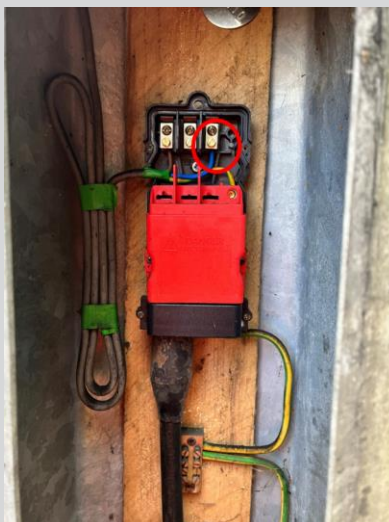
An electrical team was carrying out periodic electrical inspection and testing of street lighting columns.

An apprentice in the team, under the supervision of a qualified electrician and electrical operative was wrongly allowed to remove the private cable network fuse in the column base.

At one column, the apprentice experienced some difficulty in removing the PCN fuse bridge fitted with the "T" handle on the front of it. Being unaware of the risk of doing so; or of other options in such circumstances, he gripped the top and sides of the cover to get a better hold of it and extract it from the cut-out.

At this point he received the electric shock. It is concluded to be as a result of his finger touching one of the fuse pins whilst it was still in contact with the supply.

The injured colleague was not wearing insulating protective gloves at the time.



## The outcome

The injured colleague received a 240 V electric shock and was later that day diagnosed with a fractured bone in his elbow. It is concluded with some certainty that the fracture was a result of the spasm from the electric shock.

## THE MAIN LEARNINGS

### Clarity of safety related permitted activities, and restrictions; graduates, apprentices, placement students and inexperienced workers in particular.

- Document and communicate the activities that are prohibited until specific training has been completed and competence certified. Most specifically for graduates, apprentices, placement students and inexperienced workers.
- Communicate this information also to all who "buddy up" with and supervise the inexperienced worker(s).
- Work with the colleges and/or training providers on any pre-placement risk assessment and reviews for e.g., apprentices during enrolment and thereafter.

### Task specific PPE.

- Frequently review task specific PPE for each role to check and ensure that all in the teams are clear on the specific provision, purpose, use and care of the PPE.

### Faithful adherence to the Safe Systems of Work.

- Frequently refresh the message to colleagues so that they:
  - actively and genuinely check work done against the safe systems of work of in place
  - invoke the work-safe procedure if concerned; to stop work, discuss and agree with management the correct way to proceed
  - challenge each other on any elements that they believe need reviewing and revising
  - raise any concerns and suggestions to management.