

LIFT INSTALLATION - WORKING NEAR LIVE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT



This alert has been generated to ensure that all sites in Victoria are aware of the requirements for working on or near live electrical equipment (AS/NZS 4836:2011).

Working on, or near, live electrical equipment is defined as follows:

A situation where an electrical worker is working on or near exposed energized conductors, or live conductive parts, and there is a reasonable possibility that the electrical worker's body, or any conducting medium the worker may be carrying or touching during the course of the work, may come closer to the exposed conductors or live parts than 500mm.

The term 'on or near exposed energized electrical conductors or live conductive parts' does not apply if the uninsulated and energised part is safely and securely shielded by design, or segregated and protected with barricades, or insulated shrouding or insulating

material to prevent inadvertent or direct contact.

It is the intent of the ETU that all work shall be planned and organized to minimize the risks associated with the work. This shall be documented in the Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) and signed-off by an officer of the company before work commences.

An assessment shall be carried out at the work site before starting work to assess all risks that might have the potential to cause harm or damage.

If any person is required to work within 3m of energized exposed conductors, or parts, a competent person shall identify appropriate risk treatments (see diagram overleaf).

Safety shall not be compromised because of operational pressures to carry out the work.

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All workers shall be made aware of the hazards of the tasks and the control measures required to mitigate them. These tasks and control measures are detailed in the SWMS.

These requirements can be achieved by demonstrating the controls as detailed in Appendix A of AS/NZS 4836, and must include the need for a person who has been specifically assigned the responsibility of observing and warning against the unsafe approach to electrical equipment, exposed energized conductors or live conductive parts and other potential risks.

If a safety observer is used as part of a safe system of work, the following shall apply:

- (a) the safety observer shall be able to warn and, if necessary, stop work before the risks become too high;
- (b) the safety observer shall not carry out any other work or function that compromises their role as a safety observer, i.e. the safety observer shall not observe more than one task at a time;
- (c) the safety observer shall be able to communicate quickly and effectively with the electrical workers performing the work;

- (d) the safety observer shall be capable of providing assistance in the case of emergency as well as being competent to perform electrical rescue and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), as required. On an energised electrical installation, the safety observer shall be competent to perform their task and shall also be competent in electrical rescue and CPR.
- (e) the safety observer shall be suitably attired in personal protective equipment appropriate to the situation;
- (f) the safety observer shall not have any known temporary or permanent disabilities that would adversely affect their role and performance; and
- (g) the presence of a safety observer is one of the risk control measures to ensure electrical safety when work on energized circuits and equipment is being carried out.

It is the recommendation of the ETU that the above provisions be in place prior to any productive work being undertaken on site.

Contact your designated Health & Safety representative, your local organiser, or David Tuddenham or Kris Gretgrix.

