

Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP) Wet Testing

This alert has been generated to ensure that all Operators of Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWPs) are aware of the risks associated with operating MEWPs that have not been 'Wet Tested' in the vicinity of overhead power lines in accordance with AS/NZS 1418.10-2011.

It has been recognised that the classical test on a 'clean and dry' condition does little to prove the insulation integrity of an insert that is in service and exposed to the elements.

The Code of Practice on Electrical Safety for Work on or Near HV Electrical Apparatus (the Blue Book) covers the basic safety principles to be observed by all personnel working on or in the vicinity of HV electrical apparatus in Victoria.

The Green Book is the Electrical Safety Rules (the Rules) for the VESI Distribution Networks and incorporates the relevant Distribution related principles of the Blue Book.

Electricity Safety Management Schemes (ESMSs), submitted by Distribution Businesses as Major Electricity Companies (MECs), are required under the Electricity Safety (Management) Regulations 2009 to comply with "published technical standards" or, where there are departures, show that the level of safety is at least equal to, or greater than, those standards.

The Green Book, by incorporating the relevant Distribution components of the Blue Book, provides the means by which the MECs comply with the published technical standards.

THE GREEN BOOK 2013

Electrical Safety Rules for the VESI Distribution Networks

2.1.4.1 Testing of Mobile Plant

Insulated mobile plant used in the vicinity of overhead lines shall be subject to HV electrical test on its insulated boom section/s in accordance with AS 1418.10.

Testing shall be conducted at six monthly intervals, the vehicle shall not be accepted as suitable for use in the vicinity of live overhead conductors unless it is within test date or in accordance with AS 1418.10.

AS/NZS 1418.10 Cranes, Hoists and Winches: Mobile Elevated Work Platforms

AS/NZS1418.10 specifies the requirements for MEWPs, and details the periodic testing requirements to be maintained.

The Standard states that the 'test method devised for wet rating of MEWPs is relatively simple and portable— relying on measurement of insulation resistance and a power frequency withstand test'.

Operators are cautioned that measurement of insulation resistance alone, particularly on dry inserts, is not a sufficient means of verifying the condition of the insulation.

THE MEWP SHALL NOT BE USED IN THE VICINITY OF LIVE OVERHEAD CONDUCTORS UNLESS IT HAS PASSED THE WET TEST IN ACCORDANCE WITH AS 1418.10.

THIS INCLUDES EARTHING AND BONDING OF CONDUCTORS.

Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP) Wet Testing

The wet insert leakage current test is used to verify that the dielectric properties of the EWP boom insert and chassis insulating system are not unduly impaired after exposure to moisture.

If the MEWP has not passed the 'wet test', work should not continue until such time that it has passed the test, the results reviewed and the certification sticker sighted. Contact your designated Health & Safety Representative, your local organiser or alternatively your Union OH&S Officer.

