

Safety Alert

A serious incident has taken place



Contact with Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) – serious injury

Scope: **All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and accredited contractors**

Ref: NRX21-09

Date: 18/05/2021

Location: Wolverton, West Coast South NW&C Region

Contact: [Jimmy Pettit, Accident Investigation Manager NW&C Region](#)



Overview

On the 14 May 2021 at 00:38, a technician working in a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) basket came into contact with live 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 OLE overhead line adjustments for the Central Rail Systems Alliance.

BTP, ORR and formal industry investigations have started. We are co-operating with them.

The investigations are on-going to establish the key facts but in the meantime all staff are reminded to:

- Know and understand what your task is and how to keep yourself safe.
- Have a clear understanding of the isolation safe working limits identified on the OLE permit/Form C for the work being undertaken.
- The Test before Touch lifesaving rule requires that a test be witnessed or performed every time before touching OLE.
- Retest if you move beyond any inline OLE feature, move to different track or work on a different conductor.
- Use the [guide to electrical lifesaving rules](#)

Discussion Points

- How do you clearly identify / mark the safe working limits of isolations?
- How do you reach a clear and common understanding with others regarding the safe working limits of the isolation?
- Is the right equipment available with each group to 'test before touch'?
- How and where do you test before you touch electrification assets?
- What do you do if something is different to your understanding?