Joint Safety Guideline

WORKING SAFELY NEAR OVERHEAD POWERLINES

Government of South Australia

This Joint Safety Guideline has been developed by SafeWork SA and the Office of the Technical Regulator in consultation with the construction and power distribution industry related stakeholders to clarify safe working distances when working near overhead powerlines.

Currently, the *Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare (OHSW) Act and Regulations* administered by SafeWork SA, makes reference to one set of safe working distances and *the Electricity Act and Regulations* administered by the Office of the Technical Regulator stipulates another set of safe working distances.

This has created confusion in the industry, as the information provided on safe working distances varies depending on which authority is contacted for advice.

In order to clarify this situation, an understanding has been reached between the Office of the Technical Regulator and SafeWork SA, whereby any work being carried out near overhead powerlines by employees, contractors and sub-contractors is considered as undertaken in a workplace and therefore the requirements of OHSW legislation shall apply at all times.

TWO SEPARATE SCENARIOS APPLY:

Work Environment 1 (WE1)

All work activities must comply with the safe working distances, specified overleaf, as required under the *OHSW Regulations 1995,* the Approved Code of Practice (AS/NZS2550) and the applicable Australian Standard (AS/NZS4576).

Work Environment 2 (WE2)

Where compliance with Work Environment 1 is not possible or reasonably practical, the safe distances specified in the *Electricity Act/Regulations* may be applied if **all of the following requirements are satisfied:**

(a) Written permission from the electricity network operator has been obtained; and

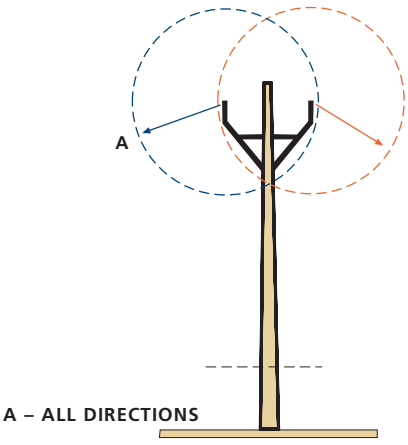
(b) All conditions specified by the electricity network operator and Technical Regulator are complied with; and

(c) The electricity network operator is notified before commencing work; and

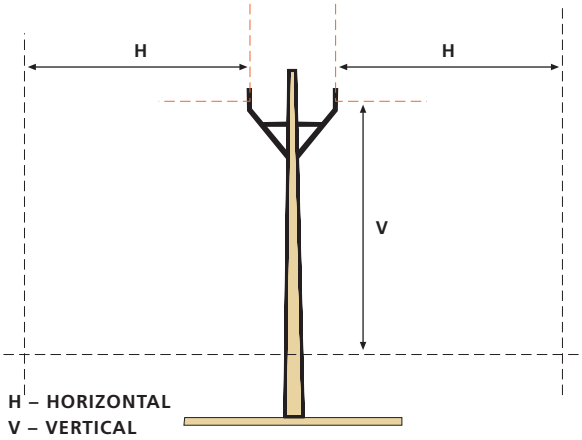
(d) A spotter (competent person with the duty of observing and warning against unsafe approach of the crane, its lifting attachments or its load to powerlines) carries out spotting duties at all times; and

(e) A documented risk assessment is carried out before any work commences in consultation with all relevant parties involved in the work.

THE DIRECTION OF DISTANCES ARE ILLUSTRATED IN THE FOLLOWING DIAGRAMS:



A – ALL DIRECTIONS



H – HORIZONTAL
V – VERTICAL

FURTHER INFORMATION:

SafeWork SA
Telephone: 1300 365 255

Office of the Technical Regulator
Telephone: 8226 5518

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Reference No: 0239 Version 2.0 Released October 2006	**Building & Structure** *Electricity Regulations 1997* Table 1 and 2 **Scaffolding**			**Cranes & Elevating Work Platforms** AS/NZS 2550.1 Crane Code (Approved Code of Practice)		**Working Near Power Lines** *Electricity Act/Regulations* 23A (3) – Safe approach limits				**Machinery** *Electricity Act/Regulations* Schedule 6 – Distance to operation of machinery, vehicle or vessel with elevating component or shear legs.		**Transport** *Electricity Act* Schedule 6 - Clearance between load being transported and aerial lines	
Work Environment	**WE1**	**WE2**	**WE2**	**WE1**	**WE1**	**WE2**	**WE2**	**WE2**	**WE2**	**WE2**	**WE2**	**WE2**	**WE2**
Direction of Distance	**H&V**	**H**	**V**	**H&V**	**H&V**	**A**	**A**	**A**	**A**	**A**	**A**	**V**	**H**
ELECTRICITY SUPPLY (VOLTS) 240	4	1.5	3.7	6.4	3	0.0	0.3	3	1	0.5	1.0	0.33	0.33
415	4	1.5	3.7	6.4	3	0.0	0.3	3	1	0.5	1.0	0.33	0.33
7,600	REFER TO WE2	3.1	5.5	6.4	3	0.3	0.6	3	2	0.5	1.5	2.4	1.5
11,000		3.1	5.5	6.4	3	0.3	0.6	3	2	0.5	1.5	2.4	1.5
19,200		3.1	5.5	6.4	3	0.45	0.9	3	3		1.5	2.4	1.5
33,000		3.1	5.5	6.4	3	0.45	0.9	3	3		1.5	2.4	1.5
66,000		5.5	6.7	6.4	3	0.7	1.4	4	4		3.0	2.4	1.5
132,000[1] (Tower)		15	6.7	6.4 10.0	3 8	1.2	2.4	5	5		3.0	2.4	1.5
275,000		25	7.5	10.0	8	2.0	4.0	6	6		4.0	3.2	4.6
	AS/NZS4576 – *Guidelines for Scaffolding* Clause 5.4.2	*Electricity Regulations 1997* Table 1 & 2	*Electricity Regulations 1997* Table 1 & 2	No spotter [Ref: AS/NZS 2550.1 Clause 1.4.9]	With spotter [Refer AS2550.1 Clause 1.4.9]	Electrical Linesperson	Instructed person [Ref: *Electricity Regulations* 23a (1) (a) (ii)]	Ordinary person using power operated tools	Ordinary person using manually operated tools	Insulated conductors, ABC	*Electricity Regulations 1997* Schedule 6 Table 2	Vertical distance	Horizontal distance

Legend: Direction H = Horizontal, V = Vertical distances, A = All directions.

[1] Distances on this row are for 132,000 kV lines are installed on poles. Distances for 132,000 kV lines on towers are in the row below (in red).

All distances are in metres.