



SAFETY BULLETIN

Fall from Height due to failed Private Steel Pole

Issued: 26 April 2018

Number: 7 - 18

What is the issue?

On 17 April 2018, a Shoalhaven Distribution work crew responded to a service repair on a private steel service pole.

The crew performed a Risk Assessment (RA) as previously determined including digging around pole and a ladder test.

Rust was found (no flaking or holes visible at the time).

The crew believed it was OK to proceed as rust is often found.

The worker climbed the ladder leaning against the pole.

The steel pole snapped at the base, coming to rest against temporary fencing (located nearby).

The worker was uninjured.

There have been reports of unassisted service poles falling down as well.

What has been done?

- An investigation has commenced.
- The Regulator was notified of the incident
- A review of our Risk Assessment for this activity has commenced

What you need to do

Based on the hierarchy of controls we are eliminating the risk by:

Effective immediately, **No steel service pole will be climbed until review of our process has completed**, as current RA process has failed.

Deadline for the review is 30 June 2018

- Continue to utilize an Elevated Work Platform (EWP) when working on a steel private pole.
- Consider a self-supporting ladder or a temporary scaffold to access heights.
- If these devices are not available (nor practical), staff are to cut away mains and make safe, contact your supervisor who can arrange an OLI/GLI inspection if required.
- If the pole is to be referred to the OLI/GLI the Fault & Emergency Trouble Order shall be closed with the completion code "415 LV S/L Column/Pole".
- Any repairs to the service pole will be the responsibility of the customer and advised by the OLI / GLI inspection process.

Who you should contact

- Andrew Chaney, HSE Lead Investigator on 0416 675 460

Procedures, WPI's or SWMS to adhere to

SWM 1.003 – Repair /Replace Overhead Connections and/or Service Conductors

WNV 1002 - Inspection of Pole Before Working Aloft



Figure 1. Rusted pole base – pole failure.