



## Reports on Phase to Phase contact events that caused outages

Two events have been recently reported where tree branches have made contact with Live Conductors causing a Phase to Phase contact resulting in an outage. One involved branches being pruned off of trees on LV circuits and one where a small tree was being felled adjacent to an 11Kv circuit.

The common causes are poor decisions, not following required procedures and use of non-approved work techniques.

**It is essential that all agreed planning controls are followed by all individuals on Line Clearance sites, and that only approved and agreed work methods are used at all times.**



**The Event:** A Certificated and Authorised work team reducing a cypress hedge with the circuit Live. The operator of the MEWP used a Silky saw to cut a step cut into the stem. He attempted to lift the stem by holding it and moving the MEWP bucket. It got caught up and he lost his grip and it fell onto the LV line causing Phase to Phase contact and a loss of supply. There were no injuries.

**The Learning:** Most of the work had been completed under a shutdown and the risk assessment to complete this section Live was not in place. The work method was not an approved technique and put operators and the circuit at risk. Completing the work while the circuit was de-energised, or, use of insulated equipment and cutting smaller sections would have allowed the work to be completed safely. Re-training of staff was completed and a safety briefing completed with all work teams

**The Event:** While pruning and removing small trees adjacent to an 11Kv overhead line on a gusty day, a Utility certificated ground-based chainsaw operator decided to fell a small stem. He did not communicate this decision to other team members and did not employ any assisted felling techniques. The felling cut was completed to a very poor standard and the small and uneven hinge snapped. The tree fell towards the line and brushed the conductors causing a phase to phase contact and a line breakage. There were no Injuries.

**The Learning:** The operator did not follow the site rules by not communicating with the site supervisor. There is no reason to rush into completing work without agreement of site staff and following the planned sequence of work.

The operator is to be fully re-trained and re-assessed. A safety brief has been completed with all working teams

