



Linesman's mate struck by battery falling from height

A linesman's mate was recently struck on the back of his neck where the spine meets the skull by a rechargeable battery that fell from height.

Staff were undertaking work to upgrade a pole mounted transformer, and a compression tool had been left suspended from the lifting eye of the newly installed transformer. As work neared completion, with no-one working aloft, the mate entered the working area to inspect the base of the pole. At the same time the battery in the tool became detached, falling to the ground and striking him on the back of the neck.



An investigation is currently in progress to determine all of the facts and the root cause, but one area identified is that the battery being used in the crimping tool had defective locking clips that are designed to secure the battery into the tool.



Learning Points

1. Carry out thorough pre-use visual inspections of all tools, equipment and PPE prior to use, and if any item shows signs of damage, or does not operate correctly **STOP** and inform your Supervisor.
2. Minimise the amount of tools, equipment and materials required when working at height.
3. Establish an Exclusion Zone, and ensure it is understood by all members of the work party, is documented on the site specific risk assessment, and is controlled by someone on the ground.
4. Ensure all tools and equipment are stored so they can't fall, and remove them once used.
5. Only enter an Exclusion Zone once all work above has stopped, and all tools and equipment have been made secure, and upon leaving ensure staff aloft are aware, so they can continue with any further works.

If in doubt about anything – STOP and consult with your Line Manager, Supervisor or Health and Safety Advisor.

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