

# Shared Learning

Key learning following a serious incident



## Issue 2.00

### Lifesaving Rule - Test before touch 25kV OLE



Never assume equipment is isolated – always test before touch.

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and RISQS registered contractors

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## Overview

This bulletin is issued to provide enhanced guidance around the lifesaving rule for 'test before touch' for 25kV Overhead Line Equipment (OLE).

A previous safety bulletin NRA 18/12 was issued in July 2017 which set out the 5 step process for test before touch on 25kV OLE.

Recent feedback from practitioners on site have highlighted a need to address concerns on the different ways 'Test before Touch' is being interpreted across the 25kV Network.

A revised application guide has been produced specifically for 25kV OLE titled "Never assume equipment is isolated – always test before touch". This is available to download from Safety Central website (<https://safety.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/LSR-update-25kV-overhead-line-equipment-Test-Before-Touch-06-02-2019.pdf>). This will be implemented for use by 30th June 2019.

The revised application guide will be incorporated into the existing application of the electrical lifesaving rules applied to electrical power assets (<https://safety.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Application-of-the-Electrical-Lifesaving-Rules.pdf>).

## Guidance on the Life Saving Rule 'Test before touch'

- The Form C holder is required to witness the test of 25kV OLE by a Nominated Person or an Authorised Person before accepting the Form C on site.
- Test before Touch is required for any circumstance which requires a person, or any tools (excluding approved insulated tools), to come within 600mm of 25kV a.c overhead line equipment.
- Only Network Rail product accepted test devices shall be used to perform testing.
- When touching the 25kV OLE, once in receipt of a Form C, a further test shall be carried out prior to work commencing for the first time at the site of work. The test shall be performed by a competent person and witnessed by all members of the working group who will be touching the 25kV OLE.
- When in receipt of a Form C and having carried out an initial test before touch, you shall test the new location if: you have moved beyond discrete features in the OLE (such as Section Insulators, Neutral Sections, Insulated Overlaps), moved onto a different track; or moved on to a different conductor. If there is any doubt, then the test shall be performed again.

## Key message

Follow the life saving rule and always test before touch.

A revised application guide has been produced specifically for 25kV OLE titled "Never assume equipment is isolated – always test before touch". This is available to download from Safety Central website (<https://safety.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/LSR-update-25kV-overhead-line-equipment-Test-Before-Touch-06-02-2019.pdf>). This will be implemented for use by 30th June 2019.

The electrical lifesaving rule for test before touch on 25kV OLE is a five-step process:

1. Test before earth – to ensure the equipment is de-energised before applying an earth.
2. Apply earths – eliminate the risk of residual voltage.
3. Always be sure the required plans and permits are in place, before you start work or go on or near the line – For 25kV OLE this means ensure that you have a Form C in accordance with NR/L3/ELP/29987 which details the working limits of the isolation.
4. Test before touch – a check that you are in the right location as per your Form C working limits.
5. Retest if you move beyond any inline OLE feature, move to different track or work on a different conductor.