

INCIDENT REPORT

Drakenstein Munisipaliteit/Municipality [PAARL]

It was a stormy weekend in May and our teams worked most of the weekend to attend to all the storm damage.

On the Monday morning a Senior Electrician and his Helpers went out with their cranetruck to replace a faulty pole transformer. It was a normal installation where the transformer is situated on a rack between two poles. The one being the line pole and the other a shorter pole underneath the line. The transformer was well underneath the line and was fed through three dropout fuses situated underneath the line on the line pole. Arriving on the spot, the Senior Electrician made sure that the drop out fuses were pulled open and that the main low tension switch was off.

He then ordered his Helper to advance up the ladder to the bottom of the transformer to loosen the bolts fixing the transformer to the rack. While he himself proceeded to put out the supports on the truck for the crane. After that he was going to arrange for the line to be switched off in order to manoeuvre the crane above the transformer to lift it off.

Next thing there was a noise and the Helper was found lying on top of the transformer. He was unconscious for a while and was badly burned. He was taken to hospital and is now undergoing skin transplants.

Nobody saw what happened and he himself cannot remember. He does remember that the dropout fuses were open and that he went up the ladder to undo the bolts on the transformer rack but he cannot remember why and how he got on top of the transformer and what happened thereafter.

Because the line is quite high above the transformer, it is assumed that he made contact with the upper part of the dropout fuses with the back of his right hand. This is a well experienced person, five years with the team, and did this kind of work many times before.

Conclusion

The person was only supposed to loosen the bolts on the transformer rack, why he climbed on top of the transformer, nobody not even himself can explain. Can it be that he was tired/overworked because of the storm damage and his concentration therefor at a low level.