

Live Work

Objective

To, identify the requirements for carrying out live electrical work (other than testing and fault finding).

Legislation

The requirement of the electrical safety legislation is that live electrical work is only to be carried out when it is not reasonable for the electrical equipment to be isolated. Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service have an obligation under the legislation to provide a safe workplace for electrical workers. They must also comply with the intent of the legislation that live work should not be carried out unless it is absolutely necessary. Additional costs for the work to be carried out at another time or commercial inconvenience are not justifiable reasons for live work.

Method

The following circumstances are required for the performance of live work:

- it is necessary in the interests of safety, whether or not electrical safety, for the work to be performed while the electrical equipment subject to the electrical work is energised
- a supply of electricity is necessary for the proper performance of the electrical work (this permits live testing)
- there is no reasonable alternative to performing the electrical work other than by live work.

If live work is to be carried out because there is no other reasonable alternative then the BEMS Manager will be requested to sign the Electrical Live Work Permit – BEMSPERM003. If this form is not signed by the BEMS Manager and completed by the electrical workers, then live work cannot continue.

Note: The requirement for the Electrical Live Work Permit – BEMSPERM003 to be completed does not include normal testing and fault finding activities.

The conditions under which live work can be carried out are:

- the electrical worker in charge of the work has contacted the Electrical Trade Coordinator and QTP prior to carrying out the live work and discussed the need for the live work and the practices to be followed
- the person in control of the electrical equipment the subject of the live work (i.e. the BEMS Manager) has been consulted and signed the Electrical Live Work Permit
- a work method statement, on the Electrical Live Work Permit for the performance of the live work is to be completed. All persons involved in the live work, including the safety observer, have participated in the risk assessment process – hazards have been identified and the appropriate action taken has been recorded on Electrical Live Work Permit and signed by all electrical workers performing the live work
- the person who performs the live work has appropriate qualifications, training and experience for the performance of the live work
- testing equipment appropriate to the performance of the live work, is available for use by the person performing the electrical work, has been properly maintained, and the person performing the electrical work makes proper use of the testing equipment in performing the work
- clothing and personal protective equipment appropriate to the performance of the live work is being used / worn by the person performing the electrical work and the person performing the electrical work makes proper use of the clothing and equipment in performing the work.

Minimum requirements shall be:

- long sleeves and long pants, or alternatively overalls (cotton / flame retardant)
- safety glasses or face mask
- insulating glove sets
- safety equipment and tools appropriate to the performance of the live work, is available for use by the person performing the electrical work, has been properly maintained, and the person performing the electrical work makes proper use of the safety equipment and tools in performing the work.

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Minimum requirements shall be:

- insulating mat
- insulated tools where practical
- the isolation point of the electricity supply for the electrical equipment the subject of the electrical work has been clearly identified and, except for electric line work, is able to be reached quickly without the need to climb over or shift obstructions
- the area where the electrical work is performed is clear of obstructions to the extent necessary for easy access to and from the area
- there is a safety observer observing the performance of the electrical work, or where the risk assessment deems a safety observer is necessary for testing and fault finding on electrical equipment
- the performance of the live electrical work is in accordance with the Electrical Live Work Permit
- after completion of the live work, monitor and review the effectiveness of the control measures and the practices. Submit the completed Electrical Live Work Permit to your Electrical Supervisor for filing.

A “**safety observer**” means a person who:

- observes the performance of the work
- is competent to help a person performing the electrical work
- has received instructions and identified the electricity isolation point
- has received instructions on the method of carrying out the live work and what parts of the installation is live
- has been assessed in the last six months to be competent in rescue and resuscitation
- has knowledge of the safety observer’s responsibilities as per Electrical Live Work Permit.

The extent of the rescue training will depend on the work activity and possible hazard i.e. switchboard, confined space, etc.

An electrical apprentice or training person with less than 6 months training must not be used as a safety observer, unless that person has previously been a safety observer for at least 1 year prior to commencement of their training program and written records of that person’s assessment have been kept.