

Authorised Person

Permission to work near overhead or underground electric lines



Working near overhead or underground electric lines

Working, operating plant or machinery in close proximity to overhead or underground electric lines is hazardous. Every year workers die or suffer serious injuries due to contact with overhead or underground electric lines. In addition to the costs associated with injury or death, repairing damage to the electricity network can be expensive.

Any work performed on or near to overhead or underground electric lines must be in compliance with the Part 5 of the Electricity Safety Regulation 2013. There is further information available on the Electrical Safety Office (ESO) website at <https://www.electricalsafety.qld.gov.au> including links to the Electricity Safety Legislation and relevant Codes of Practice.

Exclusion zones

Exclusion zones apply whenever you carry out work, or operate plant or vehicles around energised electric lines. No part of a worker, operating plant or vehicle can enter an exclusion zone while the electric line is energised. Exclusion zones are set out in Schedule 2 of the Electrical Safety Regulation 2013.

Exclusion zones can be eliminated by de-energising the electric line.

If it is necessary for you and / or worker(s) under your control, in the performance of your work activities, to work up to a reduced exclusion zone then it will be necessary for you to become an Authorised Person as defined in the Electrical Safety Regulation 2013. Under this Regulation, an Authorised Person can carry out the work at a reduced zone as described under Schedule 2.

Employer obligations

In order to authorise a worker (Authorised Person) for Energex electric lines, the employer must meet the requirements of Part 5 of the Electrical Safety Regulation, and gain permission from Energex for their worker(s) to work near to overhead or underground electric lines. The employer ensures:

- a safe system of work that complies with the Electrical Safety Regulation 2013;
- worker(s) have enough technical skill and knowledge to carry out the work;
- audits are conducted for compliance with employers safe system of work; and
- worker(s) recognise network components and understand exclusion zones.

How to authorise a worker

The employer is required to submit a written application (on company letterhead) to nominate workers for Authorised Person status to Energex. This request is to address legislative criteria, including statements addressing the following:

1. The employer has a safe system of work that complies with the Electrical Safety Regulation 2013.
2. Audits are conducted to ensure compliance to the employer's safe system of work.
3. The employer has a system in place to monitor the ongoing competency and identification of persons authorised to work near electric lines.
4. The nominated worker(s) has / have demonstrated competence in Electrical Awareness for Safe Work:
 - Identifying communication, low voltage and high voltage cables (including ways of ascertaining the voltages present);
 - Identifying communication, low voltage and high voltage cables (including ways of ascertaining the voltages present);
 - Distinguishing between insulated and bare conductors;
 - Understanding the possible causes and risks of insulated conductors being damaged and demonstrate skills and knowledge necessary to implement a safe system of work;
 - Demonstrating familiarity with the exclusion zones and requirements for the different categories of lines, conductors and authorisation of persons; and
 - Applying emergency procedures in the event of an incident.

Note: In order to assist you meet the above requirements recognised training courses are available. Details of these would be available from EsiTrain by telephoning (07) 3664 5700 or through your Industry Association or training service provider.

Note: A person who has received additional skills and training (e.g. electrical awareness for safe work), may be able to work to a reduced exclusion zone of an electrical line.

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5. Evidence of electrical awareness for safe work training is to be included with your application, i.e. course certificates or attendance register signed by course trainer.
6. Ensure that all nominated worker(s) employed by you meet these requirements and that all newly employed worker(s) (required to be Authorised Person) not included on the initial application obtain the necessary approval from Energex in the manner prescribed.

Approval from Energex

When Energex is satisfied that the employer has addressed the legislative criteria in their application, Energex will provide written approval for a 5 year period for the employer to authorise their nominated worker(s).

Authorising your worker(s)

The employer is required to authorise their worker(s) to carry out the work (Authorised Person). The nominated worker(s) would be considered to have become Authorised Persons for a period up to 5 years, thereby enabling them to operate up to the prescribed exclusion zone for an Authorised Person when working near to overhead or underground electric lines under the employer's safe system of work.

Consultation

If you are uncertain that you can meet your obligations under the Electrical Safety Regulation 2013 you can contact Energex to seek safety advice with the view to having the lines de-energised, relocated, installed underground, or having insulating or physical barriers or visual indicators installed at your worksite.

Cost will apply for the provision of any of these services and details will be provided to you, subsequent to a site inspection carried out by Energex.

Submit completed applications:

Email applications for Authorised Person, including all necessary supporting documentation to:

authorisedperson@energex.com.au

Contact Energex

To report loss of supply:

- 13 62 62


For electricity emergencies:

- 13 19 62

For general enquiries:

- energex.com.au
- custserve@energex.com.au
- 13 12 53 (8am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday)
- Telephone interpreter service 13 14 50

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