



SAFETY ALERT

Shared Learnings



INCIDENT TITLE:

Safety Barrier Failure Leading to Fall and Significant Injury

TIME AND DATE OF INCIDENT:

24th July 2019, 9.40am

INCIDENT DETAIL :

A contractor working as part of the refurbishment project at Ohau A power station, fell into an open turbine pit resulting in an injury to his lower leg/ankle.

A temporary barrier had been installed across the edge of the upper pit access area to allow a safety observer full visibility of the work party welding in an enclosed space below.

In attempting to retrieve an item from the staff in the area below, the contractor leaned against the barrier which resulted in it giving way and the contractor falling approximately 4.5m to the wooden turbine platform below.

He sustained a significant injury to his ankle which required surgery and a prolonged period off work.

LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INCIDENT:

In addition to the findings of the contractor investigation, Meridian has considered internal processes which could be improved including...

CIMS /Emergency Response Training for Rescue Team members to better understand the structure of an emergency response scenario.
Improved training and resources for the Generation Controller's, particularly in relation to medical emergency response and liaison between staff on site and emergency call takers/dispatchers.

Worksafe were notified and both PCBU's agreed to engage in an optional review process of the incident and investigation. No further action was taken and the file closed by Worksafe in October 2019.

The key learning identified by both MB Century and Meridian was the requirements for installation of edge protection were not adhered to leaving the contractor exposed to the risk of fall.

INITIAL RESPONSE AND INVESTIGATION OUTCOMES :

Meridian emergency response activated by calling the Control Centre on 7777.

Generation Controller's in Wellington managed the initial incident response including co-ordinating emergency services.

The Rescue Team provided First Aid and once emergency services were on site, lead the extraction of the injured party to the nearest medical provider.

The investigation lead by MB Century as the contractor identified key contributing factors to include:

- Limited or no risk assessment resulted in an inadequate barrier being selected.
- Incorrect barrier installation.
- Poor communication between the team members with regards to the intent and limitations of the barrier.

PHOTO:



THE CORPORATE SAFETY AND HEALTH TEAM ARE CURRENTLY WORKING ON SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT THE ABOVE LEARNINGS. IF INTERESTED IN VIEWING THE FULL INVESTIGATION REPORT FOR THIS INCIDENT, IT CAN BE FOUND HERE:

**Safety Manager: Event No. 1055495 Fall into open turbine pit area
Or contact: Holly Mason, Safety Specialist Hydro**