

SAFETY ALERT

244 – Electrical Flash Incident

Background

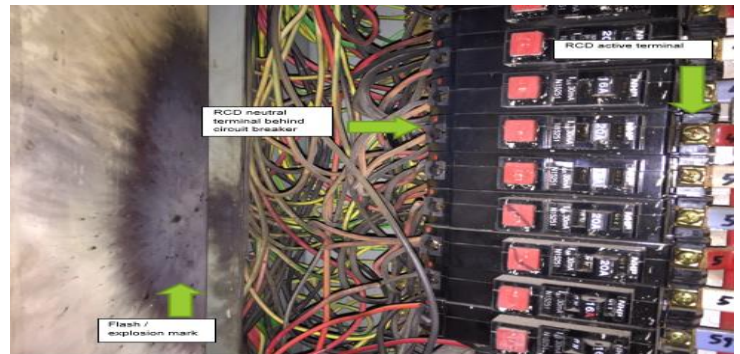
Recently two PFM electricians attended a customer site (a gym) to perform RCD trip time testing. RCD trip time testing is completed by using an RCD tester to take readings by placing testing prongs on the active and neutral terminals of the RCD to ensure it is operating correctly

The employees arrived on site, located the switchboard to be worked on and began preparing their SWMS/JSEA and setting up for the task. The work space was tight due to exercise equipment being located in close proximity to the switchboard door. This meant the escutcheon door for the switchboard could not be fully opened (only approximately 90 degrees compared to the full door range of 180 degrees) resulting in the work area being cramped.

One electrician was spotting, and the second electrician commenced performing the RCD test when an explosion and flash occurred. This resulted in 5 circuit breakers tripping and scorch marking to the escutcheon door. The employee performing the task suffered a minor burn to the back of one of their hands and they were taken to hospital for relevant precautionary tests and assessments.

Safety Issues

- The employees performing the task failed to adequately risk assess the work. The SWMS/JSEA used on the day didn't fully step out the job steps or identify key hazards and controls.
- The employees continued performing the maintenance tasks even though access to the switchboard was compromised.
- The switchboard was an older style board that hadn't been worked on by Programmed before. The wiring set up and positioning of the RCD terminals meant that positioning by the Programmed Electrician would be awkward, increasing the likelihood of an incident occurring - namely contact with live terminals
- The access issues with the switchboard and set up of the switchboard should have resulted in the task stopping and the concerns escalated to the Maintenance Supervisor.
- Insulated gloves were not being worn which is a requirement for the activity



RECOMMENDED WAYS TO CONTROL RISK

- Ensure SWMS/JSEAs are not generic and are amended before work commences so that they clearly define the jobs steps, identify the job hazards and controls and give consideration to the specific location and work environment
- If a work task is still not able to be performed in a safe manner, do not proceed with the task until relevant assistance has been provided by a manager or the HSEQ team to resolve the unsafe conditions or circumstance. **(STOP AND REPORT)**
- Ensure all workers understand Programmed's No Live Work Policy and Safe Work Essentials,
- Ensure all workers understand when relevant additional permits, risk assessments and rescue plans are required for high-risk tasks.
- PPE such as insulated gloves and face shields should be available and worn correctly.

For more information regarding this incident please contact:

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Contact Number: 0437 157 747
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Report all incidents and near misses

Please display on Safety Noticeboards and raise this matter at the next Toolbox Talk or Safety Meeting.