



## CICA – Vic / Tas Branch Crane Safety Bulletin #312 January 2023



Greetings all. Happy New Year. Today's Bulletin is a timely reminder about how to avoid electrocution. The very word sends a shiver up our spines and rightly so. Incidences involving electrical current have devastating consequences, as you'll see when you [watch this piece by the ABC](#).

Safely working near electricity infrastructure in Victoria is now being made easier, with network information now available on [the Look Up and Live app](#).

The app was developed originally by Energy Queensland and has now expanded to also include network information from NSW, Victoria and South Australia. [It is a geospatial map](#) that displays electricity networks and will continue to be updated and added to.

The app can be downloaded from [Google Play](#) or the [Apple App Store](#).

Cookie (Glen Cooke), is a powerline safety expert from Queensland, who has been recognised for his work in highlighting the importance of powerline safety, the significance of 'unintentional blindness' and life saving tips in the event of a contact. His webinar is well worth watching and can be viewed [here](#).

[Cranes and live powerlines are a dangerous mix](#) and a large proportion of crane related electrical incidents involve pick and carry cranes. These cranes have an additional element of risk because they travel and move over uneven ground resulting in the boom moving in all directions relative to the electrical hazards.

Effective control measures for working near overhead electric lines are often made up of a combination of controls.

### **Tips to stay safe when working near overhead electricity lines**

#### **Understand No Go Zones, rules and distances for safety clearances around overhead powerlines**

[In Victoria](#), the 'No-go' zone is 3m for Power Poles and 8m for towers. Spotters are required from 3-6.4 meters from poles and 8- 10m from towers.

[CICA Safety Bulletin #238 discusses Spotters in greater detail](#).

Doggers and riggers on the ground near the load are most at risk as the electricity passes from the electrical asset, through the boom, rope, and load.

#### **Ensure an [ESV-registered spotter](#) is on hand when operating machinery near overhead powerlines**

When SWMS are completed, electrical hazards should be identified which prompts the requirement for a spotter.

The dogger is not a spotter as his/her job is to watch the load. The spotter's sole role is specifically to observe the crane and load's proximity to the powerline no-go zone.

#### **Display 'Look Up and Live' stickers on any machinery or equipment that can be raised overhead.**

These stickers can be ordered [here](#) and serve as a visual reminder for individuals and teams on site.

#### **Powerlines are more difficult to see at dawn and dusk**

Avoid working in proximity to electrical assets if possible and arrange to have power cut if feasible. Otherwise conduct a thorough site inspection, risk assessment and lift plan then implement all necessary risk mitigations including, but not limited to, spotters.

#### **If contact occurs**

If a piece of machinery does hit powerlines and you are inside the vehicle, stay in the cabin (unless the crane is on fire). The electricity will pass around the driver into the ground. Call the relevant emergency number and follow instructions.

If you in imminent danger and one does need to exit the crane cabin, jump well clear of the cabin and land feet together.

Either shuffle without separating your feet or jump (feet together) clear until 10 meters away from the crane. The ground can be charged within a 10 metre radius of the crane.

Do not assist anyone injured near the load or powerlines as they may still be in contact with high voltage. Also remember that electricity jumps from object to object, between gaps. It isn't necessary to touch someone or something 'live' to be electrocuted.

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