

ETU OHS REPS NEWSLETTER



WORKING LIVE — WORKING SAFELY OR JUST LUCKY

Another worker injured, another life lost, another family suffering the aftermath of a workplace incident.

Electrical workers often needlessly take their life into their hands when they work live.

Energy Safe Victoria's Autumn/Winter edition of "*energy safe*" describes what can happen when things go terribly wrong.

The first premise when working with electricity must be to de-energise. Only when there is no other alternative and it is safe to do so, should it even be considered that the work could go ahead.

Unfortunately the first and only option for a lot of electrical workers seems to be that live work is accepted as part of the norm.

In the May edition of the ETU OHS Reps Newsletter we ran an article on flame retardant clothing. If a worker goes through the risk assessment process and finds that there is a justifiable reason that work has to occur on exposed energised equipment, flame retardant clothing is only a small part of the controls to be put in place.

Primarily, the level of control depends on the prospective fault current that may be generated.

It may be flame resistant clothing in layers, a face shield or a hood, gloves etc.

It may be found though, that with all of the personal protective equipment in place, it may still be unsafe to perform the work. If this

is the case then the activity must not be undertaken.

There are many places that sell PPE but what is imperative is that the PPE purchased is tested and approved arc flash PPE.

It is very important to be aware that normal impact rated face shields *ARE NOT suitable for arc flash protection*. These products are not designed to tolerate the forces and heat involved in an arc flash incident. They are *DANGEROUS* to use, and should not be used under any circumstances. Only approved Arc Flash face shields should be used. Recommendations on what should be used for what risk level are available from specialist companies.

One such company is Extreme Safety, their web site is as follows:
www.extremesafety.com.au.

The responsibility of providing a safe system of work rests with the employer. It is no good having a Policy about not working live, if the employees do work live. Having a proper system of OHS Management must include designing out the hazard. In many circumstances live work is performed on switchboards and motor control cubicles when fault finding. By eliminating the potential for contact with exposed energised conductors takes away the necessity to wear PPE and makes for a happier, healthier workplace.

Remember Work Dead or be Dead.

NEWS

The following information provided by an OH&S Representative from Ford in Geelong involving the HPM Plug Boss where the following problems were found has lead to a meeting of HPM management and the NSW Office of Fair Trading (OFT).

Loose screw terminals, insulation trapped under the terminal, not all strands of wire in the terminal to a neutral wire not in the terminal (only touching).

The guys at Ford initially looked at five of the HPM Plug Boss, two were brand new and of those five, four were found to be faulty. They then went and checked ten brand new boards and five more were found with problems.

The meeting was held at HPM's Legrand office following complaints received by the NSW OFT by Energy Safe Victoria.

HPM agreed to do a random inspection of six of the HPM Power Boss from six different sealed cartons.

It was observed that the stripping length was not consistent and the wire cores were not twisted sufficiently.

HPM advised that they accept that this is a quality control issue that would result in failure with no power being supplied to appliances plugged into the Power Boss.

In light of the findings HPM have taken the following action:

- ☑ All stock in warehouses are having their terminal covers removed and the cable cores removed from the terminals and checked for length, twisted correctly and re-terminated.
- ☑ Correct polarity and RCD function test.
- ☑ A representative from HPM will visit the Chinese factory that produces the Power Boss to ensure that production procedures are understood and performed correctly.



2009 Calendar

EEIT OHS TRAINING DATES

10AM -12PM

Melbourne –

Held at old ETU Office

Swanston St Carlton South

August 26

October 28

OHS REP TRAINING

Contact Tanya—0393269377 to book into the courses below.

Initial 5 Day OHS REPS Course

October 6, 7, 13, 14, 15

1 Day Refresher OHS Rep Course

Melbourne

July 22

October 28

Country

Portland – July 29

Shepparton – September 23

Mildura – November 25