

Electricity at Work Regulations (EAWR 1989)

Regulation 14

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Work on or near live conductors

No person shall be engaged in any work activity on or so near any live conductor (other than one suitably covered with insulating material so as to prevent danger) that danger may arise unless –

- (a) it is unreasonable in all the circumstances for it to be dead; and*
- (b) it is reasonable in all the circumstances for him to be at work on or near it while it is live; and*
- (c) suitable precautions (including where necessary the provision of suitable protective equipment) are taken to prevent injury.*

Suitable precautions should include, as appropriate:

- (a) *the use of people who are properly trained and competent to work on live equipment safely (see regulation 16)*
- (b) *the provision of adequate information to the person carrying out the work about the live conductors involved, the associated electrical system and the foreseeable risks*
- (c) *the use of suitable tools, including insulated tools, equipment and protective clothing (remove watches, rings, jewellery etc)*
- (d) *the use of suitable insulated barriers or screens*
- (e) *the use of suitable instruments and test probes*
- (f) *accompaniment by another person or people if the presence of such person or people could contribute significantly to ensuring that injury is prevented*
- (g) *the restriction of routine live test work (e.g. product testing) to specific areas and the use of special precautions within those areas, such as isolated power supplies, non-conducting locations etc*
- (h) *effective control of any area where there is danger from live conductors*

Electrical testing involves danger

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 states that working on live conductors is permissible provided that:

- (a) it is unreasonable in all the circumstances for it to be dead;*
- (b) it is reasonable in all the circumstances for the work to be carried out and;*
- (c) that suitable precautions are taken to prevent injury.*

Although live testing and diagnosis for fault finding may be justifiable, there could be no justification for any subsequent repair work to be carried out live.