

Technical Bulletin

TB 0344 –Management of Pole Head Defects & Associated Pole Replacements

Date: 09/11/2023

Purpose

This technical bulletin has been issued to communicate the change in requirements relating to pole head defects and condemning poles based on pole head condition.

Background

The incidence of pole failures due to pole head condition in practice is limited, with very few unassisted failure occurring in the past.

Endeavour Energy historically did not condemn poles for defects in the head, however since the introduction of a pole head defect, the number of poles condemned in the head has grown as high as 50%. Endeavour Energy has experienced very few pole failures (including prior to establishing a pole head defect) caused by degradation of the pole above ground level, indicating the increase in pole replacements due to above ground condition isn't supported by the associated risk.

Upon further evaluation, the processes being followed to condemn poles due to pole head condition are inconsistent across the business and open to interpretation / subjectivity.

To ensure all poles are being assessed the same way, are condemned based on timber condition data and aligned with the associated risk they create, the following actions apply.

Actions

All condemned pole defects due to pole top condition are to be reviewed and approved by the relevant *Manager* (refer to Updated Responsibilities list below) prior to the pole being replaced, this is to ensure the same processes are being followed across the organisation.

The updated process is as follows:

1. Pole Re-inspect WO's shall all be changed to SAP Priority 8, with the intent that they are only completed when work crews are in the area.
2. Pole replacement WO's based on 'condemned in the head' criteria are to be cancelled, unless they have already been scheduled, and/or outages booked, and/or unless evidence that the inspection process in MMI 0001 Annexure 8 has been conducted, and suitable evidence including photos are provided.
3. Reports (with measurements) and photographs shall be sent to the *Relevant Manager* for review and creation of WO's where required.
4. Pole replacement WO's shall be created upon approval from the *Relevant Manager* with works programmed accordingly.

The table below summarizes the application of the new process:

Activity	Action
Pole Re-inspect Requests	1. Scheduled when work groups are already in the area. 2. Carry out pole top inspections; collecting relevant data and photos. 3. Submit results to <i>Relevant Manager</i> for assessment. 4. <i>Relevant Manager</i> to create / trigger Replacement Pole WO's as required by the MMI.
Planned Works	1. Schedulers to plan appropriately and inform crews where a "pole reinspect" work order exists on a pole. 2. Where required, carry out pole top inspection; collecting relevant data and photos as per the MMI. 3. Submit results to <i>Relevant Manager</i> for assessment. 4. Planned works are to proceed without impact, until approvals from the <i>Relevant Manager</i> can be obtained. 5. <i>Relevant Manager</i> to approve replacement of pole. 6. <i>Relevant Manager</i> to ensure creation of Replacement WO's.

It is generally considered that: where the existing pole is supporting the existing asset (e.g. cross-arm), it will be able to support the replacement asset until replacement approvals can be obtained.

As per MMI 0001: Due consideration shall be given to other options prior to condemning a pole. This may include, but is not limited to, moving a cross-arm up/down the pole.

Updated Responsibilities

Relevant Managers for the purpose of the Actions required above include the following roles:

- Manager Transmission North / South
- Manager Distribution East / West / South / Central

Relevant Managers are required to review measurements, inspection reports and photographs and provide approval for pole head replacement projects prior to the works being completed.

Technicians and Field Personnel are required to take measurements and photographs, and provide these with an inspection report (as per MMI 0001 Annexure 8) to the relevant Manager.

Implementation

The contents of this Technical Bulletin shall be implemented immediately.

Impacted Standards

The contents of this Technical Bulletin will be included in the next update of :-

- MMI 0001: Pole and Line Inspection and Treatment Procedures.
- MMI 0002: Distribution Overhead Defect Handbook
- MMI 0012: Overhead Transmission Line Routine Inspection
- MMI 0034: Pre-Summer Bushfire Inspections

Contacts

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