IRATA SAFETY BULLETIN SB 30
HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

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1. Summary

An incident has been reported to IRATA relating to a work party not correctly identifying all the hazards associated with their task at the planning or job implementation phase;

"Operators were not informed by the client or had not noticed low voltage electrical bird protection on the structure themselves. Operator touched the bird protection & received electrical shock to their left hand.

All work ceased until electrical bird protection powered off & isolated. Operators briefed to be aware of these types of protection in the future."

2. Recommendations

As referenced in the IRATA ICOP, proper hazard identification during the risk assessment process, whilst planning for the job, may have helped identify this hazard correctly and allowed for the necessary steps to be taken to isolate the low voltage electrical bird proofing. It could be beneficial to talk to building managers and/or area authorities and use open questioning techniques during discussions as they may have more knowledge of hazards onsite and in conclusion may help provide for a more comprehensive risk assessment.

2.2.4 Risk assessment

2.2.4.1 Once it has been decided that rope access is a suitable method to carry out the intended task, employers should review carefully the procedures to be followed for carrying out the work. They should identify any hazards and examine how they can be removed or, if this is not possible, how the risk can be reduced to an acceptable level. This is determined by carrying out a risk assessment, which is also known as a job safety analysis (JSA). For more information on risk assessment, see **Part 3, Annex A**.

2.2.4.3 Hazard identification should comprise identification of anything with the potential to cause harm, for example:

a) power cables, which could pose a high risk of electric shock; …

2.2.4.5 The hazard identification and risk assessment should be site specific. They should be documented and should cover all aspects of the work to be undertaken. The document(s) should be available to personnel working on-site and should be regularly reviewed formally by them during the course of the work, to take account of changing circumstances, e.g. weather conditions and other work being carried out. Operations such as oil platforms, refineries, power stations and railways have a formal written permit-to-work system to address hazards, by requiring certain precautions to be taken. Examples are: electrical isolations; restriction of other work; communication requirements; specified personal protective equipment

2.11.7 Pre-work checking

2.11.7.1 If a permit to work is required, this should already have been obtained and checked. Permits to work are an effective method of isolating a hazard before work starts and to ensure that it remains isolated while work is in progress and until everyone is clear of the danger area.

See IRATA Safety Bulletin number 26 which highlights how important it is to identify all the hazards associated with a task during the planning and risk assessment phase of the project.

NOTE Permit to work systems are not fool proof and technicians must be aware of other site operations

IRATA | 1st Floor | Unit 3 | Eurogate Business Park | Ashford | Kent | TN24 8XW
T: +44 (0)1233 754600 | F: +44 (0)1233 754601 | www.irata.org
IRATA secretary: Graham Burnett