

SAFETY ALERT

Shared Learning's

INCIDENT TITLE:

Tools dropped from height

TIME AND DATE OF INCIDENT:

Thursday 17th September 2015

INCIDENT DETAIL :

Recently on a Meridian Energy wind farm, whilst connecting bags on the internal crane, a bag below the one being attached was caught in the wind like a wind sock. It tipped up in the wind and two pieces of tooling fell out and hit the ground.

The wind was gusting 16m/s – 20m/s at the time.

No one was injured, drop zone rules were in place and vehicles were well clear of the drop zone.

The incident was considered a Near Miss.

INITIAL RESPONSE AND INVESTIGATION OUTCOMES :

Playing a significant outcome in the event was that the tool bag being used was unable to be sealed and therefore was not fit for purpose, even though it was tested and tagged.

General refreshers around tool bag procedures and education around the hazards were not in place. These are mainly in relation to hazard identification and tethering of tools when working at height.

A drop zone was in place as a primary mitigation though further identification of the hazards would have indicated that the working at height tool bag was not fit for purpose.

LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INCIDENT:

The key findings were:

- The bag could not be fully closed.
- The design of the working at height tool bag was not suitable for use in high winds.
- The hazard of falling tools from height and control measures were considered (the drop zone was in place) though this was only a primary mitigation and did not mitigate the possibility of someone entering the drop zone uninvited.

Recommendations from this incident are:

- All working at height tool bags must be able to be sealed completely and securely when hoisting gear to and from the nacelle or being carried on the turbine.
- Purpose made, sealable bags should be manufactured for items that may protrude from working at height tool bags.
- Undertake a review of the working at height tool bags being used by staff and contractors to ensure they meet this minimum requirement.
- Remove any non-compliant working at height tool bags from site.
- Ensure all hazards associated with the tasks are identified mitigations are in place.
- Assess wind speeds when using the crane.

PHOTO:

Non-compliant working at height tool bags



The Corporate Safety and Health Team are currently working on systems to support the above learnings. If interested in viewing the full investigation report for this incident, it can be found in:

If you have further questions regarding this incident, please contact Wind Safety Specialist, Robert Ball (robert.ball@meridianenergy.co.nz) or any other member of Meridian Energy's Corporate Safety and Health team.



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