Substation Explosion
9 December 2019

Incident overview

Two workers suffered serious burns when a ring main unit (RMU) exploded while they were working on an electrical power distribution system in Port Macquarie.

Image taken at site after the accident

The investigation

- SafeWork NSW inspectors responded to the incident.
- SafeWork NSW commenced an investigation to determine the cause and circumstances of the incident.
Safety information

Businesses are reminded of their duty to identify hazards and manage risks to health and safety in accordance with the provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017.

Consider ‘reasonably practicable’ control measures to manage the risks when working with electricity. Make sure:

- work within an electricity substation and on high-voltage equipment is only performed by trained and authorised staff trained under a safety management system defined by the asset owner/operator
- the electricity network operator (ENO) has a safety management system that meets the requirements of the Electricity Supply (safety and network management) Regulation 2014
- the owner/operator of other high-voltage installations complies with the NSW service and installation rules and requirements of the ENO supplying the installation.

Further information

- IPART safety alert 191209-1
- Electrical work guidance material
- SafeWork NSW Electrical Safety Video
- Code of practice for managing electrical risks in the workplace

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. No conclusions should be drawn from the information in this publication about the cause of the incident or the culpability of any party.