

# ASP Safety Alert

## ASP Compliance and Practices

Alert Number: SA10\_20

2 September 2020

Subject: Managing risks in excavations greater than 1.5m in depth

### Key Messages

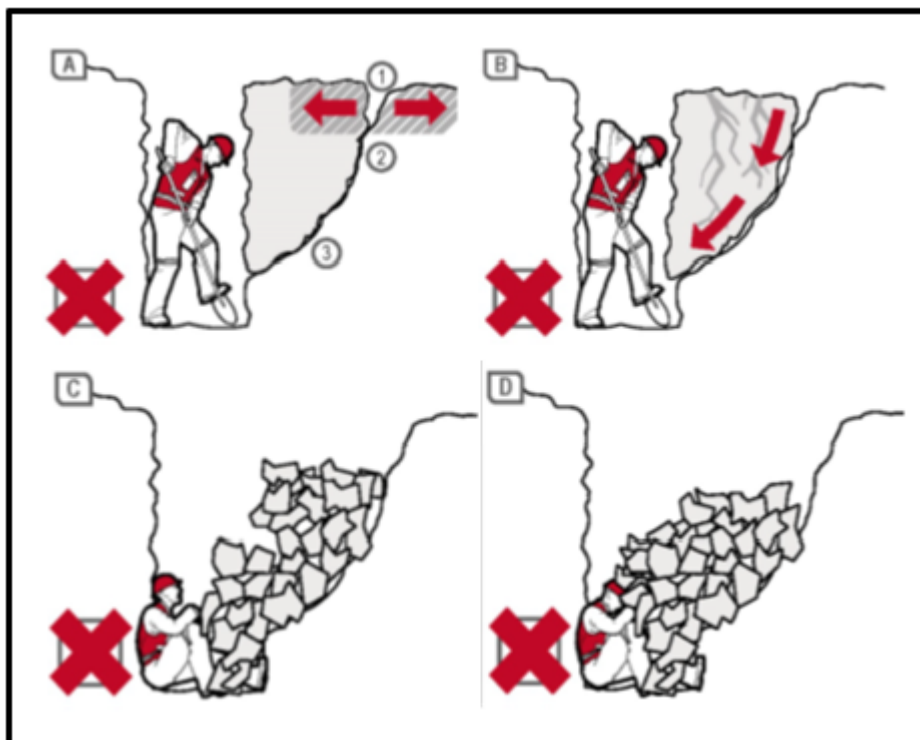
- No worker should be in a trench greater than 1.5m deep unless support has been installed; and
- All excavations should be carried out in accordance with the SafeWork NSW's *Code of Practice for Excavation Work*

### Risks in excavations greater than 1.5m

Ground collapse is one of the primary risks to be controlled in excavation work. Ground collapse can occur quickly and without warning, giving a worker virtually no time to escape, especially if the collapse is extensive. Trench collapse of this nature can cause severe and potentially fatal injuries.

SafeWork NSW's *Code of practice for Excavation Work – January 2020 (Code of Practice)* states that “No worker should be in a trench greater than 1.5m deep unless support has been installed”.

The following diagram from the Code of Practice shows a typical example of ground failure where material collapses onto a worker, pinning them against the wall of a trench.



Note: Ausgrid workers are required to perform a hazard assessment before entering any excavation (such as jointing bays excavated by ASPs), regardless of depth, and where that excavation is determined to be unsafe, they must not enter the excavation and may be required to report the hazard to their supervisor.

## Actions Required

ASPs must comply with the Code of Practice for all excavation works, and must discuss and record individual site conditions, hazards and controls in your daily job-specific Hazard Assessment.

Where excavations are greater than 1.5m deep, or where site conditions may increase the risk of ground collapse, ASPs must ensure that adequate support is installed to prevent ground collapse in accordance with the Code of Practice.

According to the Code of Practice, methods of support may include:

- benching and battering;
- shoring; and
- hydraulic systems.

The ground conditions will have a significant impact on the appropriate excavation method and control measures to be implemented.

Where site conditions change throughout the day/project, ASPs must stop and re-assess the hazards and introduce further controls where necessary. This must also be recorded on ASP's Hazard Assessment documentation.

If you have any questions, please contact [ASPauthorisations@ausgrid.com.au](mailto:ASPauthorisations@ausgrid.com.au)

## Ausgrid

### Network Compliance & Authorisations