

Prosecution



Summary

On 20th December 2018 two Network Rail employees were called to attend Godinton substation to respond to a possible circuit breaker fault.

In order to remedy the fault, the employees sought to remove a fuse within the circuit breaker, which was located inside the substation. When changing the fuse, there was a large explosion. One employee was knocked back and another set on fire, suffering third degree and mixed depth burns to 17% of his body. The substation was destroyed by the fire.

The immediate cause of the incident was Network Rail's failure, over a significant period of time, to prevent water from leaking into the substation building and a failure to maintain the dehumidifiers installed inside. The conditions in the substation were unsafe and led to an electrical arc and a fire whilst Network Rail's employees were working on a circuit breaker within the substation.

Company

Network Rail Infrastructure Limited

Breaches involved

Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Date(s) of offence

On and before 20/12/18

Plea

Guilty

Result

Network Rail Infrastructure Limited were convicted of an offence under Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Court

Folkestone Magistrates' Court

Sentencing date

14 April 2021

Penalty

£696,666

(Large company – sentenced in High culpability/Harm Category 2 range)

Costs

£33,647.45

Location of offence

Address:

Godinton Substation, Ashford, Kent

ORR details

ORR Team

ORR Directorate: Railway Safety Directorate