

# Safety Share:

Activity: Ground IP

Location: SE Peru

#### Date: May 2015

Actual consequence: Minor injury

**Risk potential: Fatal** 

What happened: While a locally hired field worker was collecting a survey cable from the field using a chest mounted reel, the cable snagged on rocks and brush. The worker pulled on the cable in an attempt to release it. The action of pulling the cable, combined with the effect of local topography, resulted in the cable lifting off the ground and contacting an overhead 23kV powerline, 225m upslope from the worker's position. The worker was knocked to the ground and received a single minor burn.

### Immediate actions:

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 The worker was taken for a medical examination in the nearest major town

### Preliminary causes

- Local topography created the conditions that allowed the cable to rise >7m above ground surface when under tension
- Neither the location of the overhead powerline nor the path of survey cable was visible from the workers position
- The presence of the overhead powerline had not been identified during either project planning or daily pre-start risk assessments
- Approaching cattle and alpaca encouraged the worker to collect the cable from the field (to eliminate the risk of damage)
- Survey supervisors were located out of sight of the worker

## Immediate learnings/applications

- All cables that pass beneath overhead utility lines to be securely anchored to the ground
- The presence of powerlines to be identified during the survey planning stage (and incorporated into survey risk assessments)
- The value of wearing electrically insulating footwear is undefined but assumed to have helped protect the worker



