



GUIDANCE

IN-SERVICE INSPECTION PROCEDURES

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Reference: **Oil Filled Switchgear in Lift Control and Similar Light Duty Applications**

SITUATION:

HSE guidance on oil filled switchgear, (HSE Operational Circular 483-27 'Oil filled electrical distribution and other switchgear') recommends that a phased replacement programme should be prepared for all low voltage switches with manual mechanisms, manufactured prior to 1960. Engineer Surveyors need to be able to assess whether such equipment may remain in service or should be replaced.

GUIDANCE:

As a supplement to the HSE guidance, it is recommended that:-

Accurate records should be available and consulted for all such switchgear, which includes Ellison *Bantam* oil switches (circuit breakers) often used in lift control and other similar light duty applications. These records should include the date of installation, the rating of the device (current and fault rating, if possible) and date that the equipment was last maintained.

It should be verified that the equipment is being well maintained, including checking of seals and gaskets, and that a maintenance schedule does exist for the equipment. It is also important that the switchgear fault rating is adequate for the duty concerned. However, unless there have been major system modifications this would not normally be a problem, and where the *Bantam* is fed by a fuse switch, the correct fuses will ensure that the switch is adequately protected, which will be the case in most circumstances.

Notwithstanding the HSE guidance, provided the switches remain in a good state of repair, and since their fault duty and associated risk is low, it is not expected that this replacement programme for low voltage switches will need to include such *Bantams* in lift control and similar light duty applications.

Additionally, where there is a local fused switch feeding such *Bantams*, it is probable that the oil switch may be removed altogether, without adversely affecting operability or safety, if it is concluded that the oil switch should be replaced.



From an operational viewpoint, the HSE Guidance concludes by stating that: *“Where the circuit-breaker has recently been operated for the purpose of routine isolation, it may be reclosed manually providing that the electrical circuit it feeds has not been disturbed”*

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that it should not be necessary to modify these *Bantam* installations in any way, provided they remain in a good state of repair.