

On Tuesday afternoon this week an onshore wind turbine caught fire in the Netherlands, the turbine was isolated at the time of the fire for maintenance works. There were four mechanics working in the turbine at the time of the fire, two mechanics managed to escape to safety and called the fire service. Sadly two of the mechanics ages 19 & 21 were unable to escape and perished in the fire. The cause of the fire is currently under investigation.

The fire service located one of the bodies of the deceased in the Nacelle and one at the bottom of the turbine near the exit.

Please see the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hJeaPzDnOE&feature=youtu.be>

This incident really brings home the risks involved in wind turbine maintenance in relation to emergency preparedness and fire. It is imperative that operators are familiar with the emergency procedures for escaping from the turbine and the emergency warning alarms.

Due to the inherent design of wind turbines there is little protection from fire, a basic turbine design encourages the flow of air and act as a chimney for any fires within the turbine. Please see the attached presentation to demonstrate the potential effects of a fire in a turbine.

To mitigate the effects of a fire in a wind turbine the following measures can be taken;

- When in the turbine close the entrance door to limit the air flow to any potential fire.
- Ensure all hatches are closed to limit the air flow
- Ensure you are aware of what the fire alarm in the turbine sounds like
- Ensure you are familiar with the emergency escape plan from all locations within the turbine
- Ensure all escape equipment is accessible
- Do not store equipment in front of the emergency exits
- Ensure you are familiar with how to operate the emergency rope escape systems
- Know the location and types of fire extinguishers on the turbine
- Keep a high level of housekeeping in the turbine, do not leave combustibles anywhere on the turbine (Rubbish / surplus equipment)
- Ensure portable electrical equipment is tested and in good condition

- Ensure you know the location of persons working on the turbine
- If in doubt ASK.

This will be a focus point for the Renewables HSE Team going forward, your support to improve our fire safety will be much appreciated.

Kind Regards,

Renewables HSE Team