



Interpretation

Section 236. Climbing space

**Rule 236G. Climbing space past longitudinal runs not on support arms
(2007 Edition, page 159)
(15 November 2011) IR563**

1. Statement of Problem and Supporting Comments:

Rule 236G was modified somewhat in the 2007 edition, deleting the language about covering wires with rubber protective equipment or otherwise guarding them, as an unvarying practice, before climbing past them.

Is this modification meant to change the intent of Rule 236, particularly as it regards placement of communications facilities on a jointly used pole? We have operated under the understanding that the dimensions and location of the climbing space (Rule 236A) would remain the same and that the phrase “climbing space past longitudinal runs” in Rule 236G does not mean that it is now permissible to climb over them, essentially using them as a ladder. Although the climbing space may rotate as a worker ascends the pole, the worker must first climb past the space-limiting cable/conductor.

Is it still necessary to maintain a quarter of the pole as a clear climbing space, consistent with the description provided in Rule 236A?

Interpretation

The Interpretations Subcommittee has considered the subject Interpretation Request for Rule 236G and has developed a consensus report as follows:

“The Interpretation Request asks two questions. The first question is the intent of the Rule 236G revision in the 2007 Edition, particularly regarding placement of communication facilities on a jointly used pole. The answer is no. The revision was not intended to change placement of communication facilities, including cables, on a jointly-used pole.

For your information, the change was made to reflect common work practices. For the most part, workers were not covering communication cables when climbing past them



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and it was determined that such action was not a safety issue. Note that energized electric facilities must be covered in accordance with Part 4 Rules for the Operation of Electric Supply and Communications Lines and Equipment.

Your second question asks if it is still necessary to maintain a quarter of the pole as a **“clear”** climbing space, consistent with Rule 236A (emphasis added). The answer is a qualified yes. Rule 236A was not revised; a climbing space still must be provided on one side or corner of the pole.

However, this space is not necessarily “clear” as described in your question. See Rule 236G; note that longitudinal runs of cables on messengers are not considered to obstruct the climbing space if the cables are installed such that qualified workers can climb past the cables.”

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