

Electrical Asset Inspector interview questions

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What to expect

Electrical Asset Inspector interviews focus on field judgement, electrical safety and the practical use of asset systems. Employers want to see that you can inspect confidently, rate defects consistently and communicate findings clearly to planners and crews.

- **Process and field method:** Questions that ask you to walk through an inspection from arrival to report, showing a repeatable and safe approach.
- **Technical and standards:** Questions on transformers, switchgear, overhead lines and how you apply AS/NZS 4836, AS/NZS 3000 and network asset standards.
- **Safety and scenario:** Situations involving live conductors, unsafe assets or changing field conditions where you must explain your judgement under pressure.
- **Behavioural:** Past examples of defect identification, escalation, teamwork and communication with supervisors, crews or planners.
- **Systems and reporting:** Questions about recording condition data, defect ratings, photos and recommendations in tools such as SAP, Maximo and ArcGIS.

Typically a phone or video screen with a recruiter or hiring leader, then a technical and safety panel with a field supervisor and asset engineer. Some employers include a site walk or practical assessment where you talk through an inspection and use a mobile app or thermal camera. Expect follow-up questions on network standards, defect rating and how you prioritise competing field tasks.

1. Walk me through how you inspect a pole and overhead line from arrival to final report.

Why they ask

This shows whether your field method is safe, repeatable and complete, and whether you understand what a planner needs from your data.

How to structure your answer

Use a process walk-through: arrival and site risk assessment, asset identification, visual and structural checks, electrical checks, data capture, defect rating, escalation and report.

Example answer

"I arrive, park safely and complete a site risk assessment before I approach. I check permits, access and any nearby hazards, then confirm the asset ID against my schedule. For the pole, I inspect the base, butt, crossarms, insulators, stays and conductor connections. For the overhead line, I look for corrosion, abrasion, broken strands, sag issues and vegetation clearances. I use binoculars and a thermal camera where needed, and I keep safe approach distances at all times. I record defects with photos and GPS coordinates, rate them against the network criteria, and upload the data to the asset system. I finish by writing a short recommendation and flagging any urgent defect to the supervisor or network controller."

2. Tell me about a time you identified a defect that could have caused a serious incident.

Why they ask

This probes your attention to detail, your safety judgement and whether you escalate promptly rather than leaving a risk in the field.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: situation, task, action and result. Keep the focus on what you saw, what you did and what changed because of it.

Example answer

"On a feeder inspection, I noticed a pole with a leaning base and a hairline crack that was not in the previous report. My task was to complete the inspection and decide whether the asset was safe. I stopped work, took photos and measurements, and checked the soil around the base. I rated it as urgent, called the network controller and sent the data to the asset engineer. A crew attended and found the pole was close to failure. They arranged a replacement and kept the line isolated until it was safe. No one was exposed, and the feeder avoided an unplanned outage."

3. You find a pole with a cracked base and a live low voltage conductor down nearby. What do you do?

Why they ask

This is a judgement under pressure question. Employers want to see that life safety comes first and that you know when to stop and call for help.

How to structure your answer

Use a safety hierarchy: stop, assess from a safe distance, treat conductors as live, establish an exclusion zone, call for emergency and network support, then record and report.

Example answer

"I stop at a safe distance and do not approach the downed conductor. I treat every conductor as live, establish an exclusion zone and keep members of the public away. I call the network control room and emergency services, and I check for anyone in danger without putting myself at risk. If I am trained and authorised, I isolate and tag the area, otherwise I wait for a switching operator. I document the location, take photos from a safe distance and record the defect. My priority is life safety first, then network security, then asset data."

4. How do you assess whether a transformer or switchgear is compliant with network and safety standards?

Why they ask

This tests your technical knowledge and your ability to apply standards consistently rather than relying on guesswork.

How to structure your answer

Use a standards-based technical answer: relevant standards, visual and test checks, defect rating, then recommendation.

Example answer

"I compare test results and visual condition against AS/NZS 3000, AS/NZS 4836 and the network asset standards. For transformers, I check oil level and leaks, cooling, bushings, earthing and tap position, and I review thermographic results. For switchgear, I check operation, interlocks, signs of overheating, gas pressure where applicable and protection flags. I rate the defect against the network criteria and recommend condition-based maintenance or replacement. If something does not meet the standard, I record the evidence and escalate it through the correct channel."

5. Describe how you record condition data and defect ratings in an asset system.

Why they ask

This shows your digital literacy and whether you can produce data that planners, engineers and field crews can trust.

How to structure your answer

Use a process answer: capture, classify, attach evidence, sync, cross-check and flag gaps.

Example answer

"I capture GPS coordinates, asset ID, component condition, defect code and priority in the mobile inspection app. I sync that to SAP or Maximo, attach photos and thermal images, and cross-check the location in ArcGIS for network context. I write a short note so a planner can act without calling me. Before submitting, I check the defect rating against the network criteria and flag any data gaps. Good records reduce repeat visits and help the maintenance team plan the right work."

6. Tell me about a time you had to explain a difficult defect or maintenance recommendation to a supervisor or crew.

Why they ask

This checks your written and verbal communication and whether you can influence decisions with evidence rather than opinion.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR with a clear communication action and a practical result.

Example answer

"At a depot, I found a transformer with a rising thermal trend and a slight oil weep. The crew had it listed for routine service. I showed the supervisor the thermal images and explained the risk of bushing failure if it was left until the next cycle. We agreed to bring the service forward and add a thermographic follow-up. I wrote the recommendation in Maximo with the evidence attached. The transformer was serviced before it failed, and the crew started sending me thermal images for a second opinion."