Advanced Switchgear Operations and Maintenance Training Course

14 - 18 Dec 2026

Barcelona

5900 € (Per Person)

Ref: #ERE9932_95967

Course Introduction / Overview:

This training course provides a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of low and medium voltage switchgear operations, maintenance, and safety protocols. In modern electrical power systems, switchgear is the central nervous system, responsible for protection, control, and isolation, making its reliable operation paramount to industrial and commercial continuity. This program moves beyond basic theory to deliver practical, actionable knowledge essential for anyone working with these critical assets. As emphasized by J. Lewis Blackburn in his seminal work "Protective Relaying: Principles and Applications", a deep understanding of protection schemes is fundamental to system safety and reliability. This course, offered by BIG BEN Training Center, integrates these core principles with hands-on operational strategies and advanced maintenance techniques. Participants will gain a robust understanding of switchgear components, circuit breaker technologies, protective relaying, and systematic troubleshooting. The curriculum is designed to empower professionals to manage electrical distribution systems safely, minimize downtime, and ensure compliance with international standards, thereby enhancing both personal competency and organizational resilience.

Target Audience / This training course is suitable for:

- Electrical Engineers.
- Electrical Supervisors.
- Substation Operators.
- Maintenance Technicians and Planners.
- Project Engineers.
- Commissioning Engineers.
- System Operators and Planners.
- Asset Management Professionals.
- Health and Safety Officers.
- Electrical Contractors.

Target Sectors and Industries:

- Electrical Power Generation and Utilities.
- Oil and Gas Production and Refining.
- Heavy Manufacturing and Industrial Plants.
- Petrochemical and Chemical Processing.
- Data Centers and Critical Infrastructure.
- Renewable Energy Facilities (Wind and Solar Farms).
- Marine and Offshore Installations.
- Governmental and Public Sector Facilities.
- Commercial Buildings and Real Estate Management.

Target Organizations Departments:

- Operations and Production.
- Maintenance and Reliability.
- Engineering and Design.
- Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE).
- Project Management and Execution.
- Facilities Management.
- Technical Services.
- Asset Integrity and Management.

Course Offerings:

By the end of this course, the participants will have able to:

- Interpret single-line diagrams and control schematics for switchgear systems.
- Differentiate between various types of circuit breakers and their operating mechanisms.
- Implement safe operating procedures, including lockout/tagout (LOTO) and switching sequences.
- Understand the principles of protective relays and their coordination within a power system.
- Conduct essential maintenance and testing procedures for switchgear components.
- Diagnose and troubleshoot common faults in low and medium voltage switchgear.
- Apply arc flash safety principles and understand mitigation strategies.
- Evaluate the condition of switchgear using modern diagnostic techniques.
- Comprehend the functionality of gas-insulated and air-insulated switchgear.
- Develop effective preventive maintenance plans for electrical distribution equipment.

Course Methodology:

The training methodology at BIG BEN Training Center is designed to foster a deep and practical understanding of switchgear systems through an immersive and interactive learning environment. We believe that adult learning is most effective when it combines theoretical knowledge with real-world application. Therefore, the course heavily relies on detailed case studies of actual switchgear failures and successful maintenance interventions, allowing participants to analyze complex scenarios in a controlled setting. Interactive sessions, including group discussions and problem-solving exercises, encourage collaborative learning and the sharing of diverse industry experiences. The instructor will facilitate sessions using a blend of presentations, video demonstrations of operational procedures, and analysis of technical drawings. A significant portion of the training is dedicated to practical simulations and workshops where participants can apply learned concepts, from developing a switching plan to interpreting test results. This hands-on approach ensures that attendees not only grasp the theoretical underpinnings but also build the confidence and competence to apply their new skills immediately in their workplace, ensuring a tangible return on investment.

Course Agenda (Course Units):

Unit One: Fundamentals of LV and MV Switchgear Systems

- Introduction to Electrical Power Distribution Systems.
- Voltage Classifications (LV, MV, HV).
- Key Functions of Switchgear: Control, Protection, and Isolation.
- Major Components of Switchgear Assemblies.
- Understanding International Standards (IEC, ANSI/IEEE).
- Principles of Electrical Safety and Hazard Identification.
- Reading and Interpreting Single-Line and Three-Line Diagrams.
- Introduction to Switchgear Ratings and Specifications.

Unit Two: Switchgear Construction and Circuit Breaker Technology

- Types of Switchgear: Metal-Clad, Metal-Enclosed, and Switchboards.
- Air-Insulated Switchgear (AIS) vs. Gas-Insulated Switchgear (GIS).
- Detailed Study of Circuit Breakers: Air, Vacuum, and SF6.
- Operating Mechanisms: Spring, Pneumatic, and Hydraulic.
- Role and Function of Fuses, Disconnect Switches, and Contactors.
- Busbar Arrangements and Configurations.
- Instrument Transformers: Current Transformers (CTs) and Voltage Transformers (VTs).
- Motor Control Centers (MCC) Design and Operation.

Unit three: Protection, Control, and Automation

- Principles of Overcurrent and Earth Fault Protection.
- Introduction to Protective Relays: Electromechanical, Solid-State, and Microprocessor-Based.
- Understanding Relay Protection Codes (ANSI Device Numbers).
- Time-Current Coordination and Selectivity Studies.
- Differential, Distance, and Busbar Protection Schemes.
- Switchgear Control Circuits and Schematics.
- Interlocking Schemes: Mechanical and Electrical.
- Introduction to Substation Automation and SCADA Systems.

Unit Four: Switchgear Maintenance, Testing, and Commissioning

- Developing a Comprehensive Switchgear Maintenance Program.
- Preventive vs. Predictive Maintenance Strategies.
- Routine Inspection and Cleaning Procedures.
- Diagnostic Testing: Insulation Resistance and Polarization Index.
- Contact Resistance Measurement and Ductor Testing.
- Circuit Breaker Timing and Travel Analysis.
- High Potential (Hi-Pot) Testing Principles and Safety.
- Infrared Thermography for Fault Detection.
- Commissioning Procedures and Pre-energization Checks.

Unit Five: Advanced Operations, Troubleshooting, and Safety

- Understanding and Mitigating Arc Flash Hazards (NFPA 70E).
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Electrical Work.
- Systematic Troubleshooting of Switchgear Faults.
- Emergency Operations and Black Start Procedures.
- Analysis of Common Switchgear Failure Modes.
- Partial Discharge Analysis for Condition Monitoring.
- Impact of Renewable Energy Integration on Switchgear.
- Future Trends in Switchgear Technology and Digital Substations.

FAQ:

Qualifications required for registering to this course?

There are no requirements.

How long is each daily session, and what is the total number of training hours for the course?

This training course spans five days, with daily sessions ranging between 4 to 5 hours, including breaks and interactive activities, bringing the total duration to 20 - 25 training hours.

Something to think about:

Considering the rise of digital substations and IEC 61850 standards, how might the traditional roles of switchgear maintenance and operations technicians evolve over the next decade?

What unique qualities does this course offer compared to other courses?

This course distinguishes itself by moving beyond standard operational training to provide a holistic, strategic perspective on switchgear asset management. While many programs focus narrowly on either maintenance or operations, this curriculum integrates both disciplines, reflecting the interconnected nature of modern electrical systems. It places a profound emphasis on the "why" behind the "how," ensuring participants understand the engineering principles governing protection schemes and maintenance diagnostics, not just the procedural steps. The content is rigorously updated to include contemporary challenges and technologies, such as the impact of renewable energy sources on grid stability and the advent of digital substations. Unlike purely theoretical courses, our methodology is deeply rooted in practical application, using real-world case studies of catastrophic failures and successful interventions to instill critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The focus on advanced safety protocols, particularly arc flash hazard analysis and mitigation based on NFPA 70E, provides a level of depth that is crucial for ensuring personnel safety and regulatory compliance in high-risk environments.