

Less than two weeks to go!

The countdown is on for SA Power Networks to submit the 2020-2025 Regulatory Proposal. Once the Proposal is lodged you will be able to see all documentation posted on the Australian Energy Regulator's website here.

Continuing stakeholder conversations

While SA Power Networks has been busy engaging with our reference groups and other stakeholders about our plans for 2020-25, we have also continued our business as usual discussions around vegetation and public lighting programs.

Tariff structure engagement

We have been speaking with retailers and our reference groups regarding our Tariff Structure Statement (TSS) for 2020-25. The TSS outlines how we plan to improve equity by ensuring customers pay a fairer share of their cost for their use of the electricity distribution network. Stakeholders have told us that it's important that our new cost-reflective tariffs address emerging network issues and are simple for customers to adopt. The proposed tariffs aim to help us to manage growing solar energy output in the middle of the day, and shave peak demand in the evening – saving customers money in the long-term.

Vegetation



SA Power Networks has been working for many years with a range of stakeholders to improve outcomes from tree trimming around powerlines. Since early 2018 we have been talking to stakeholders about updating the Electricity (Principles of Vegetation Clearance) Regulations 2010 -- the key legislation governing vegetation clearance near powerlines in South Australia.

The current regulations expire on 1 September 2021 and SA Power Networks is exploring several amendments to ensure replacement legislation creates a framework that:

- improves visual amenity outcomes for the community
- maintains safety and reliability of supply outcomes;
- reduces the amount of tree trimming required; and
- reduces long-term costs.

A preliminary Discussion Paper was developed in June 2018 and sent to key stakeholders for feedback. Following this feedback, a series of workshops were held across the state during October 2018 to gather further input on the process.

Proposed changes that have been well supported by stakeholders include targeted tree removals, improved notifications for landholders, adoption of more risk-based approaches in non-bushfire areas and update of the appropriate species list and bushfire boundaries.

The Final Discussion Paper, outlining the feedback from our engagement with stakeholders and our proposed amendments, is the final stage prior to formally lodging a submission with the Office of the Technical Regulator to commence the Parliamentary review process in March 2019. Submissions on the revised discussion paper close on 25 January 2019.

Public Lighting

The Inaugural meeting of the newly formed Public Lighting Working Group was held on 18 December. The group agreed key expectations for the group and endorsed the Terms of Reference. Minutes from the Inaugural Public Lighting Working Group can be found here.



Some like it hot!

Summer and extended periods of extremely hot weather can cause issues across our electricity grid.
There are three basic types of power interruptions that can occur:

1. Localised outages in the distribution network: these can be for any number of factors – ie a tree limb on a line, a truck hitting a pole, or equipment failure. These outages can involve a handful or a few thousand households depending on the cause, and supply will be restored once the fault is identified and repairs or switching to other supply lines takes place.

2. Power system disturbance: where a major event has disturbed the security or stability of the power system, customers may be interrupted over a wide area. There are many possible causes, but most frequently it is caused by a sudden interruption to critical transmission lines. For example, the State-wide black out in September 2016 was prompted by a major disturbance in the power system when transmission towers were damaged by severe weather.

3. Involuntary load shedding: in the event that there is not enough supply to meet demand, the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) will order sections of the grid be turned off until sufficient supply can be restored, or demand reduces. These are known as rolling blackouts, as different parts of the grid take turns being without power. These are infrequent, and efforts are taken to minimise their frequency and duration.

SA Power Networks utilise a suite of communication methods to provide updates for customers during outage events, including:

- 24/7 phone line 13 13 66
- website
- SMS messaging
- mainstream print and radio media
- Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube social media channels.

For more information on supply issues in periods of extreme heat, see the Energy Networks Australia and the Australian Energy Council's factsheet on Heatwaves and Electricity Supply (January 2019).

- the Stakeholder Engagement Team

If you have any concerns about this newsletter or want to provide additional feedback, please email us on grievance policy.