

# Media release

11 January 2020



## Essential Energy powers on

Hundreds of Essential Energy crew have been working since New Year's Day to restore power to more than 37,000 customers impacted by the devastating bushfires that affected both the South Coast, Riverina and Snowy Valley regions of NSW.

With a highly coordinated and focussed response, just over 90% of customers affected by power outages have had power restored.

Despite working in firegrounds affected by smoke, contending with difficult terrain and dealing with hazardous trees, an additional 1,300 customers had their power restored yesterday. Around 3,800 Essential Energy customers remain without power.

Crews continue to work this weekend to repair networks and continue to progressively restore power to customers.

An additional 64 field crew as well as a contingent of staff including vegetation management, asset inspectors and safety, from across Essential Energy's footprint are currently travelling to the fire affected areas to provide more on-the-ground support to the 320 Essential Energy personnel who've been working in the region since the bushfire recovery began.

Luke Jenner, General Manager Customer and Network Services, said "As well as our crews on the ground, we have activated additional personnel including asset inspectors, fleet specialists, vegetation management crews, materials specialists, safety, customer service, engineering and logistics support.

"Our goal is to ensure a safe and efficient response to the bushfire restoration efforts, with the health and wellbeing of our communities and staff the number one priority."

Due to the continuing fires, some areas are yet to be fully scoped to understand the extend of the damage to the electricity network. This means some customers will be facing outages for at least another week, possibly longer.

To assist communities until power is restored Essential Energy has been supporting evacuation centres with connecting and running generators to telecommunication services, water and sewerage services, nursing homes and supermarkets, once the local Emergency Operations Centres in conjunction with the Rural Fire Service make the decision to provide a generator. Essential Energy has so far assisted with more than 33 generators.

Senior Essential Energy personnel have been stationed in Emergency Operations Centres, working hand in hand with key authorities such as the RFS, NSW Police and the RMS in the overarching bushfire response, including assisting making roads safe and clearing vegetation.

Customers can find information about specific areas currently impacted by bushfire-related power outages and current expected power restoration at <https://www.essentialenergy.com.au/bushfire-updates> or contact 13 20 80.

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