

# Media statement

19 July 2019



## Essential Energy workforce reshaping update

The energy industry is constantly evolving, and to maintain downward pressure on the network component of electricity prices, we must assess the most efficient way to deliver a safe, reliable electricity supply. Lower energy prices across regional, rural and remote NSW are in the best interests of our more than 855,000 customers.

Over the next three to five years, Essential Energy will progress a series of initiatives to deliver a better service at a lower cost and create a business capable of responding to the rapid changes being experienced in the electricity sector.

Over the 2014-19 regulatory period Essential Energy delivered a 40 per cent real reduction in network charges and has committed to delivering further reductions through 2019-24. Delivering on those commitments and initiatives means having an appropriately-sized workforce to safely and efficiently manage the network across our service territory.

As a result, field and non-field roles across the business are being re-evaluated while ensuring Essential Energy meets its obligations for safety and community expectations.

At the same time, Essential Energy is pursuing more effective ways to safely operate the network through:

- ✓ standardisation and automation of work to reduce manually intensive processes
- ✓ better work bundling to reduce duplication of effort and rework
- ✓ data-informed decision making to do the right work that adds the right value at the best time.
- ✓ investing in innovative and enabling technologies to service emerging customer needs.

The operational efficiencies these changes achieve can mean that some existing roles become redundant or surplus.

On average, work hours since 2014 have decreased due to more efficient asset management practices and improved condition of assets. At the same time, efficient investment in the network has resulted in a 68 per cent reduction in customer interruptions since 2003.

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### FACT FILE:

- Essential Energy builds, operates and maintains one of Australia's largest electricity distribution networks, servicing regional, rural and remote NSW, and parts of southern Queensland.
- Our footprint covers 95 percent of NSW, traversing 737,000 square kilometres of landmass with 183,612 km of powerline.
- The network services more than 855,000 customers with approximately 4.6 customers to each kilometre of powerline, which is almost one-tenth the customer density compared with our counterparts in NSW.
- Essential Energy's footprint also includes 1.38 million power poles, equating to 1.6 power poles per customer.