

Essential Energy South East bushfire update – Tuesday 31 December

Essential advises community to prepare for extended outages

Essential Energy is asking community members impacted by the current bushfires burning through the South East of NSW to be prepared for potentially extended power outages, as crews are currently unable to safely access the firegrounds.

With a number of fires still burning and extreme conditions forecast over coming days, Essential Energy has warned more customers could be affected in areas where blazes continue to threaten power supplies.

As of 3pm on New Year's Eve, more than 31,280 customers are without power in the Batemans Bay area. Those customers will unfortunately be without power until the area is deemed safe to access by our crews and we can carry out repairs. In a separate fire-related outage, around 1,920 customers are without power in the Tumbarumba/Tumut area. Essential Energy is working closely with the RFS to ascertain when we can safely gain access to review the situation and have senior personnel in the Emergency Operations Centres.

Essential Energy acknowledges the support and patience of the community as we work with authorities to safely access fire affected areas and begin work to restore power. The public are urged to stay at least eight metres away from any fallen powerlines and report them on 13 20 80.

The Essential Energy website www.essentialenergy.com.au will have information about outages, however, due to the uncertainty as to when we can safely access the sites, in many cases estimated times to restore will not be available.

FACT FILE:

- Essential Energy builds, operates and maintains one of Australia's largest electricity distribution networks, servicing 855,00 customers across regional, rural and remote NSW.
- Our footprint covers 95 percent of NSW, traversing 737,000 square kilometres of landmass with 183,612 km of powerline, 163,417 of those in designated bushfire zones.
- 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.

<ENDS>

Media contact: Sarah Johnston, Community Relations Manager South, t: 0418 172 860