

## Essential Energy Vegetation Management Plan Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Vegetation Management Plan CEOP8008 is to:

- Ensure proper guidelines and methodology are in place to promote Best Practice in the maintenance of vegetation under or near powerlines with minimum danger to the public, vegetation management workers and electrical workers
- Ensure compliance with appropriate legislation.

Essential Energy has a responsibility to maintain clearance between powerlines and vegetation. This responsibility is stated in *The NSW Electricity Supply Act 1995* Division 2 Part 48: Interference with electricity works by trees.

The importance of the Vegetation Management Plan CEOP 8008 being a compliant plan is highlighted by Clause 43(k) of the *State Environment Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007* (ISEPP) which provides that development (in this case, the clearing of trees) is "exempt development" under the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act* (EP & A Act), but only if carried out in the following circumstances:

1. For the purpose of vegetation management that complies with a tree management plan prepared in accordance with clauses 103 & 104 of the *Electricity Supply (General) Regulation 2001*; or
2. Vegetation management that is exempt under Clause 21: Maintenance of Public Utilities-Electricity Transmission of the *Native Vegetation Regulation 2005*.

### **Native Vegetation Act – Exclusions**

*The Native Vegetation Act 2003 No. 103* does not apply to the following types of clearing of native vegetation:

- (g) Any clearing that is, or is part of, an activity carried out by a determining authority within the meaning of Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* if the determining authority has complied with that part.

The Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 Part 5 (110) defines a determining authority to be a public authority (110E) (e) a statutory State owned corporation within the meaning of the *State Owned Corporations Act 1989*. Essential Energy falls under state owned corporation umbrella.

The Native vegetation management NSW guidelines available at [www.nativevegetation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nativevegetation.nsw.gov.au) states that Public Utilities such as Essential Energy, can undertake clearing to maintain public utilities (electricity, water, gas and electronic communication) without approval. Such clearing includes minimising fuel loads under powerlines to reduce the chance of smoke from a fire causing a line trip. Maximum distances for clearing depend on the nominal operating voltage of the powerline.

**Note:** Tree lopping is not considered 'clearing' under the *Native Vegetation Act* unless it results in the death of the tree.