



1 December 2008

ETSA Utilities, summer and the bushfire season

ETSA Utilities has been working progressively toward the 2008-2009 summer and is well prepared for the early start to the Fire Danger Season and the forecast hot summer ahead.

Each year ETSA Utilities undertakes a planned program to prepare for summer and the bushfire season. This year's review and preparations have included:

- aerial and ground patrols of lines in bushfire areas to confirm line safety
- vegetation clearance around powerlines in bushfire risk areas
- replacement and upgrading of about 180 transformers at greatest risk of overload
- upgrading work at 10 substations to lift capacity to meet summer demand
- pre-ordering and strategic deployment of emergency spares
- purchase of a new mobile substation to add to the fleet of two mobile substations, mobile generators and mobile transformers for deployment in an emergency
- a review of emergency procedures (including procedures for disconnection and re-connection of power)
- an upgrade of call centre facilities and back up arrangements to ensure customers have even better access to up to date information in an emergency.

General Manager Services, Sue Filby, said ETSA Utilities was well prepared, but not complacent.

"Our pre-summer preparations have been very successful in the past couple of years, but we are not resting on our laurels.

"In addition to our efforts to make the system as safe as possible, we have invested in additional back up substations and transformers and further improved our ability to communicate with customers during major outages."

Ms Filby said "apart from the need to ensure reliability of supply in summer when we encounter peak demand, we have a significant responsibility to protect the safety of the community and our electricity assets through the fire danger season. The importance of this was highlighted in the Ash Wednesday fires."

Ms Filby said it was important that members of the community, particularly those living in high fire danger areas, were aware that ETSA Utilities may have to disconnect power in extreme fire danger situations.

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About ETSA Utilities

ETSA Utilities is South Australia's electricity distributor, delivering energy from the transmission network through poles, wires, substations and transformers to about 800,000 customers. With more than 60 years experience, we are one of South Australia's largest organisations, employing about 1700 people throughout metropolitan and regional South Australia.

ETSA Utilities is 51 percent owned by Cheung Kong Infrastructure Holdings Limited and Hongkong Electric Holdings, which form part of the Cheung Kong Group of companies. The remaining 49 percent is owned by Spark Infrastructure, which began trading on the ASX in December 2005.



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"In a situation of extreme fire danger we will consider the risk associated with high temperatures and strong winds and disconnect power if we believe this is necessary to avoid the risk of our lines starting a fire.

"All efforts will be made to minimise the inconvenience to customers, however, the safety of people and property is paramount," Ms Filby said.

She said people living in bushfire risk areas should consider their needs in terms of back up systems for power, including for water pumping.

Ms Filby reminded members of the public they should not approach damaged electrical infrastructure, especially where lines are on the ground, as they may be live.

"They should contact the emergency services or ETSA Utilities immediately and identify the location of the fault."

Information on power interruptions is available by telephoning 13 13 66 or via the website at www.etsautilities.com.au

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