

Media Release

Wednesday September 4, 2024



VNI West land access agreements surpass 100

Transmission Company Victoria (TCV) now has land access agreements in place for more than 100 properties in the VNI West draft corridor to allow important survey work to continue.

The announcement of the preferred easement that will host the VNI West transmission line is expected in coming weeks.

Since August last year, TCV's dedicated landholder liaisons have worked closely with individual landholders on their access agreements, which has allowed completion of more than 50 field surveys including ecological, historical heritage and noise monitoring assessments.

Depending on the area of land covered by the two-year Land Access Agreement, landholders will receive payments of up to \$50,000.

VNI West Program Director Tony Hedley emphasised the importance of the agreements, saying that the surveys were essential to helping the project team and independent authorities understand existing land uses and reduce possible impacts on farms and farming.

"Our main objective is to find the most suitable location for the preferred easement that minimises impacts to farms and farm operations, balanced with consideration of the environment and other site constraints," Mr Hedley said.

"We recognise that the best way to truly understand the land is through on-site investigation, and landholder support in this effort has been invaluable.

"Access for field surveys is voluntary, and in every case, access terms are discussed and agreed.

"This ensures survey teams obey farm rules, such as biosecurity protocols, including thorough washdown of boots, equipment and vehicles with disinfectant cleaner on entry and exit from every property.

"TCV has taken on board specific requests from landholders, such as conducting ecology surveys on foot rather than in vehicles during wet weather, to minimise impacts to the land and access tracks.

"Information gathered from landholder feedback and farm surveys has helped shape the preferred easement for transmission, in some cases providing critical data on intensive irrigation infrastructure, or plans for new houses or sheds," he said.

On signing an access agreement, the landholder is entitled to an access payment in recognition of the potential inconvenience and time spent in negotiating the agreement and providing access.

"We greatly appreciate the generosity of landholders in providing detailed information about their properties and we look forward to working together to find the optimal location for this essential transmission line," said Mr Hedley.

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Landholders willing to provide survey access to their properties, ahead of the preferred easement release, are encouraged to contact their dedicated Landholder Liaisons – following the preferred easement release, the areas required for survey access will be reduced.

In September, the draft ~2km corridor for VNI West will be narrowed to a preferred easement between 70-120m along most of the route, pending ongoing assessments as part of the Environment Effects Statement (EES) process.

Landholder Liaisons will be in contact with landholders with property in the preferred easement ahead of the public announcement.

Please visit transmissionvictoria.com.au for further information.

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About VNI West

VNI West is a major project to build a new transmission line between Victoria and New South Wales. It will harness renewable energy in both states and maintain the reliability and security of electricity supply as coal-fired power stations retire and energy demand continues to grow.

As coal-fired power stations retire, new renewable energy generation will be built to fill the supply gap. New transmission lines are needed to connect this power to our grid.

In Victoria, a draft corridor around 2km wide has been identified and will be narrowed down to a preferred easement of 70-120m wide in 2024, subject to project assessment and approvals. The corridor runs from Bulgana to near Kerang and then across the border into New South Wales. Construction is scheduled to commence after all approvals have been obtained, in 2026.

About TCV

Transmission Company Victoria (TCV) is a company created by AEMO Victorian Planning to progress the VNI West transmission project. TCV will discuss the VNI West transmission project with landholders, Traditional Owners and the community to understand local concerns as the project moves toward construction. As AEMO is the system planner and will not physically construct or own the transmission lines, it established TCV to make sure that commitments made in the early stages are captured and honoured across the life of the project. TCV will provide project updates and will work with the community on this important transmission line. For more information, head to www.transmissionvictoria.com.au.