

# Media Release

**The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP**

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change  
Minister for Solar Homes



Tuesday, 15 February 2022

## EXPERT PANEL TO ADVISE ON DISTRIBUTION NETWORK REFORMS

The Andrews Labor Government is investigating long-term reforms to the state's electricity distribution network following prolonged power outages caused by last year's severe storms.

The Electricity Distribution Network Resilience Review Expert Panel will lead the second phase of a review into the role of electricity businesses following the 9 June storm.

The review was established to examine how businesses can improve distribution network preparedness and response to prolonged power outages arising from storms and other extreme weather events.

Following phase one of the review – conducted from September to October 2021 – a report was delivered to the Government with short term recommendations to be implemented for summer 2021-22.

These included improvements to communication with critical infrastructure operators, enhanced public messaging to support community preparedness, and faster and more streamlined support for power-dependent customers. All the recommendations were underway before the October storms.

Phase 2 will identify long-term measures and regulatory reform options to mitigate and better respond to prolonged power outages.

The panel will be led by Chairperson Jo Benvenuti, a former Executive Officer at Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre and an experienced consultant across consumer engagement and energy and water policy.

She will be joined by Dr Claire Noone, a Principal at NOUS Group who has experience in regulatory design and led reform work at Consumer Affairs Victoria; and Mark Paterson, the Managing Director of low-carbon energy systems firm Strategen who has previously worked across distribution networks.

The panel will host several roundtables in March with distributors' representatives, technical experts, community representatives, energy industry experts and the emergency management sector. Phase 2 will also include a survey for community members and businesses from affected areas.

The Phase 2 report will be complete by 31 March 2022. To read more, visit: [www.energy.vic.gov.au](http://www.energy.vic.gov.au).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

*"Many Victorians were devastated by power outages following the June and October thunderstorms, and with climate change set to make storms more frequent and intense we must do more to bolster distribution networks."*

*"We were proud to deliver relief measures such as temporary generators, Prolonged Power Outage Payments, and funding packages for urgent repairs."*

*"The independent Electricity Distribution Network Resilience Review Expert Panel will examine what long-term measures are needed to improve mitigation and response to prolonged power outages."*