

# Media Release

**The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP**  
Minister for Climate Action  
Minister for Energy and Resources  
Minister for the State Electricity Commission



Saturday, 27 May 2023

## TAKING ACTION TO DELIVER CRITICAL ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

The Victorian Government is accelerating key electricity transmission projects to secure an affordable and reliable supply of renewable energy for homes and businesses across Victoria.

Minister for Energy and Resources Lily D'Ambrosio today confirmed that the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) can progress the critical VNI-West project, which will better connect the Victoria and NSW energy grids.

VNI West is a 500kV transmission line that will connect the Victorian and NSW grids, ensuring reliable electricity access during high demand periods, and allowing for around 3.4 gigawatts of additional renewable generation to be built across the solar-rich Murray River Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) and wind-rich Western Victoria REZ.

A Ministerial Order has been implemented to progress AEMO's preferred option, which connects VNI West to the planned Western Renewables Link (WRL) at a terminal station at Bulgana in Victoria's west, then linking to a terminal station near Kerang in north central Victoria, before crossing the Murray River north of Kerang.

VNI West still requires relevant planning and environmental approvals, which will provide more opportunities for community members and Traditional Owners to share their views on the project.

AEMO will continue ongoing consultation as it works to refine the route, with community input will play a crucial role in helping design a route that minimises impacts on the landholders, the environment and farming operations.

Acknowledging the important role the community plays in hosting transmission infrastructure, landholders will be entitled to payments \$8,000 per year per kilometre of transmission hosted for 25 years. These payments are in addition to existing arrangements for compensation, which cover any loss of land value.

Once a preferred corridor for VNI West is identified, AEMO will allocate landowners potentially hosting transmission lines a Land Liaison Officer – and will work directly with landowners to minimise impacts to their land, including interruptions to normal farming activities.

VNI West is just one element in the transformation of Victoria's electricity grid, which will see the state reach 95 percent renewables by 2035 and create 59,000 jobs.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy and Resources Lily D'Ambrosio

*"Progressing critical transmission projects like VNI West is necessary to deliver cheaper, more reliable renewable energy to Victorian homes and businesses."*

*"There can be no energy transition without new transmission infrastructure – as Victoria moves towards 95 per cent renewables by 2035, we have a duty to modernise our electricity network."*