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MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**



**THE HON LILY D'AMBROSIO
MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND RESOURCES**

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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EXPANDED ELIGIBILITY FOR POWER OUTAGE PAYMENTS

The Albanese and Allan Governments will continue to support Victorians impacted by severe weather this summer.

The eligibility criteria for the Prolonged Power Outage Payments (PPOP) is being extended to reflect the unique nature of two extreme storm events in short succession.

More than 530,000 Victorians experienced power outages as a result of a catastrophic weather event on 13 February, which caused extensive damage to more than 12,000 kilometres of poles and wires across the state.

While 99 per cent of customers impacted by the 13 February storm were reconnected before 22 February, some areas experienced another prolonged outage as a result of a new weather event.

To ensure Victorians continue to be supported through the impacts of both events, the eligibility for the PPOP has been expanded to households that have been without power for 7 days cumulatively, as a result of both extreme weather events on Tuesday 13 February and Thursday 22 February.

The Prolonged Power Outages Payments are \$1,920 per week, for up to three weeks.

The payment will be administered by distribution businesses and will help families buy much needed basic items and find alternative accommodation.

The eligibility expansion for the PPOP payment only applies to the 13 February and 22 February events and is jointly funded by the Australian and Victorian Governments through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

Customers impacted by power outages may also be eligible for assistance under the Victorian Guaranteed Service Level payments. Assistance is in the form of electricity bill credits – the amount customers are entitled will depend on individual circumstances.

To find out what other supports are available, contact the Emergency Recovery Hotline on 1800 560 760. Supports available includes mental health support, case management, business support and can connect people with the additional and existing services.

Quote attributable to Federal Minister for Emergency Management Murray Watt:

“A number of households have been impacted by the power outages and are facing the costs of replacing fridge-loads of food, sometimes more than once.

“The Albanese Government will continue to work with the Allan Government to ensure communities get the support they need as recovery efforts continue.”

Quote attributable to Victorian Minister for Energy Lily D’Ambrosio

“These storms caused significant damage to residential properties and private electricity infrastructure across parts of Victoria and we’re making sure those impacted twice have access to the support they need.”

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