

Media Release

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



Tuesday, 5 March 2024

ENSURING COMMUNITIES ARE PART OF OUR ENERGY FUTURE

The Allan Labor Government is putting early engagement with landholders and local communities, as well as fairer sharing of benefits at the core of our energy future.

Minister for Energy and Resources Lily D'Ambrosio today introduced the *National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid) Bill 2024* – the next step to establish VicGrid and ensure it has the powers to modernise the way new energy infrastructure is planned and developed in Victoria while giving communities a voice in the process.

This major change to the way energy infrastructure is planned in Victoria and will see VicGrid undertake all planning and consultation on energy projects, ensuring that community views taken into account at the start of the planning process.

Only projects that have been through community consultation undertaken by VicGrid – not by the private developer, can be put to tender for development – minimising the impacts a project might have on the community.

Under the legislation, VicGrid will implement the new Victorian Transmission Infrastructure Framework (VTIF) – which includes meaningful community engagement and benefit sharing arrangement for farmers, communities and Traditional Owners that host new transmission lines.

The Bill also locks in payments that recognise the crucial role landholders who host energy infrastructure are playing in the energy transition – \$200,000 per kilometre of new transmission hosted, indexed and paid over 25 years. These payments are in addition to compensation paid to landholders for the impact of infrastructure on their land.

The next stages of VTIF will feature community funds that ensure the regions hosting energy infrastructure also see meaningful and lasting benefits from the energy transition. VicGrid will be consulting on these arrangements throughout this year.

Victoria is leading the way to establish the country's first offshore wind industry – that's why the Labor Government is updating the *Energy and Public Land Legislation Amendment (Enabling Offshore Wind Energy) Bill 2024* to include offshore wind.

The Bill will allow offshore wind developers to obtain long-term tenure over public land for offshore electricity infrastructure – providing certainty to industry.

The Government is also introducing the *National Energy Retail Law (Victoria) Bill 2024* that will make the Australian Energy Regulator responsible for ensuring Victorians are not left in the dark if their energy provider goes under. If an energy provider goes under, the AER will automatically transfer customers to another provider.

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

"Victoria is undergoing a once-in-a-generation energy transition. We're making the community central to this and doing things differently to make sure it's done right."

"We're making sure energy infrastructure is delivered in a way that reduces impacts and provides benefits for the community and encourages investments that will keep the lights on and secure Victoria's energy future."

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