

Fast Facts: Transmission powerlines

About the project

The Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) project is a proposed new high-capacity 500 kilovolt (kV) double-circuit overhead transmission line, connecting the Western Renewables Link (WRL) in Victoria to EnergyConnect in New South Wales. The project will provide a vital new transmission line to link renewable generators and ensure reliable, affordable power as Australia transitions to clean, low-cost renewables.

Transmission powerlines

Why is transmission important?

Australia's transition to net zero will only be possible if we can develop new transmission to connect clean, renewable generators, which are dotted around the landscape, with populations in towns and cities. At the moment, we don't have enough transmission and as a result renewable energy is being 'spilled' or wasted with solar and wind power generators unable to get the power they are producing into the grid.

What is transmission?

Transmission lines transport high voltage electricity (typically 220 to 500 kilovolts in Victoria) from power generators to the distribution networks which deliver electricity to our homes, schools and workplaces.

Why haven't I heard of many transmission projects?

Our historic reliance on coal-fired power in Victoria has meant that limited new major transmission has been built in Victoria in more than four decades, but with the rapid retirement of these workhorse generators there is an urgent need for new transmission lines.

Who owns transmission lines?

AEMO Victorian Planning's (AVP) role is to work through the regulatory process, which ensures the outcome from any investment gives the best value for Victorian consumers. The Transmission Company of Victoria (TCV) has been established to undertake all work in relation to VNI West in Victoria once the Regulated Investment Test for Transmission (RIT-T) is completed. AVP then contracts for a service provider to build, own, operate and maintain the resulting transmission line.

Why can't transmission run underground?

There are circumstances where transmission lines are run underground, however, the vast majority of projects are above ground. There are a number of reasons for this, including cost and the environmental impact of putting lines underground. Cost is important because it is AVP's job to ensure major transmission projects deliver the best value for Victorian consumers with the aim of keeping energy prices low.

Is it safe to live near transmission lines?

There is a lot of major transmission infrastructure in and around our cities and regional centres. AVP and Transgrid's primary concern is the safety of people and the environment, and we are committed (and required by legislation) to providing a safe and reliable transmission network.

Transmission lines do not present a health risk, however, there are dangers associated with high voltage electricity, which is why there is always separation between transmission lines and homes or businesses. AVP and Transgrid encourage the principle of "prudent avoidance" when planning houses, schools, sensitive land uses and other types of new development to ensure the proximity to existing or planned high voltage transmission lines is considered.

The service provider appointed will consider recognised international EMF health guidelines and the concept of prudent avoidance in the design and operation of the projects.

How can I provide feedback or find more information?

For more information on the VNI West project please visit the TCV website:
www.transmissionvictoria.com.au

Contact our team for further information on the project and upcoming engagement activities through the contact details below.

1800 824 221

enquiries@transmissionvictoria.com.au