

Dear 

I am writing in relation to your application made under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* (FOI Act) in which you requested access to the following documents:

Copy of all minutes of meeting and records of the Office of the Technical Regulator relating to its consideration and assessment in 2010 to 2012 (inclusive) of SAPN's approach to disconnection and non-auto operation of recloses in bushfire risk areas on fire danger days in light of recommendation 32 of the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission as mandated by State Bushfire Coordination Committee.

In accordance with Premier and Cabinet Circular PC045, if you are given access to documents as a result of this FOI application, details of your application, and the documents to which access is given, may be published in the agency's disclosure log. A copy of PC045 can be found at <http://dpc.sa.gov.au/what-we-do/services-for-government/premier-and-cabinet-circulars>.

A search has been conducted and one (1) document was discovered that falls within the scope of your application. The document is identified in the attached schedule. In respect of the document, I have determined as follows:

Document 1

I have determined that this document should be released in part.

With regard to this document, the parts to which I have not granted you access are names of individuals no longer employed by State Government; and contain information that is not relevant to your application and have been deemed 'Out of Scope'.

With regard to this document, the Technical Regulator has classified the information contained on page eight of the briefing as confidential under section 11 of the *Electricity Act 1996*, and this page is then exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act.

Under Clause 6(1) of Schedule 1 to the FOI Act, a document is an exempt document if its disclosure would involve the 'unreasonable disclosure of information concerning the personal affairs of any person'. This information falls within the definition of personal affairs under the FOI Act and is therefore exempt from release pursuant to Clause 6(1).

Exemptions

The following exemption applies from the FOI Act:

Clause 6 – Documents affecting personal affairs

(1) A document is an exempt document if it contains matter the disclosure of which would involve the unreasonable disclosure of information concerning the personal affairs of any person (living or dead).

The following exemption applies from the *Electricity Act 1996*:

11 – Obligation to preserve confidentiality

(2) Information classified by the Technical Regulator as confidential is not liable to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 1991.

Appeal Rights

If you are dissatisfied with this decision, you are entitled to exercise your rights of review and appeal as outlined in the attached documentation.

If you have any queries in relation to your application, please contact me on [REDACTED] or via email DEM.FOI@sa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Julianne Cirson
Accredited FOI Officer

11 August 2021

SCHEDULE OF DOCUMENTS

Freedom of Information application by [REDACTED], seeking access to:

Copy of all minutes of meeting and records of the Office of the Technical Regulator relating to its consideration and assessment in 2010 to 2012 (inclusive) of SAPN's approach to disconnection and non-auto operation of recloses in bushfire risk areas on fire danger days in light of recommendation 32 of the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission as mandated by State Bushfire Coordination Committee.

Doc No	Description	Exemption Clause(s)	Determination
1	Briefing dated August 2010	Clause 6 – Personal affairs Section 11(2) of the <i>Electricity Act 1996</i> Information not relevant to your application has been marked as “Out of scope”	Document released in part



MINUTES forming ENCLOSURE to

DTEI File No: 2006/17711/02
Doc no: 4891818

TO: MINISTER FOR ENERGY

**CC: Clause 6(1), CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Clause 6(1), CHIEF OFFICER, COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE
ROB FAUNT, TECHNICAL REGULATOR**

**RE: VICTORIAN BUSHFIRE ROYAL COMMISSION FINAL REPORT
RECOMMENDATIONS (AS THEY RELATE TO ELECTRICITY)**

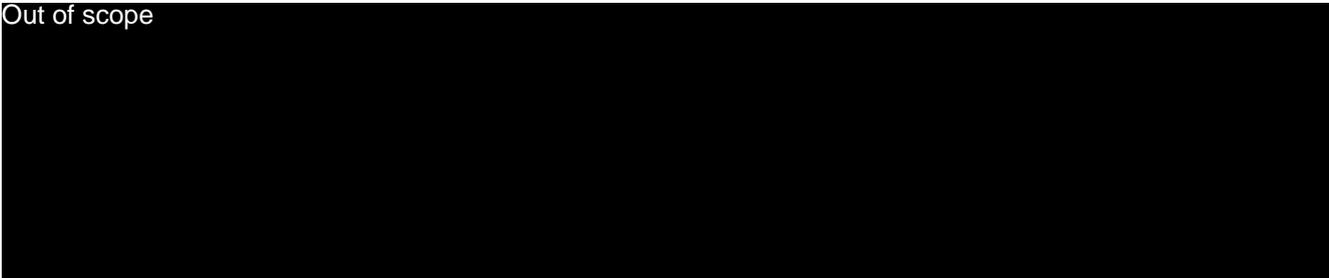
PURPOSE

To provide an initial brief on the Final Report Recommendations of the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission (VBRC), as they relate to the electricity industry.

BACKGROUND

The VBRC was held to investigate the causes and responses to the bushfires which swept through parts of Victoria in late January and February 2009. The Final Report Recommendations were handed down on 31 July 2010. The eight recommendations 27 – 34 (electricity-caused fires) form Attachment A.

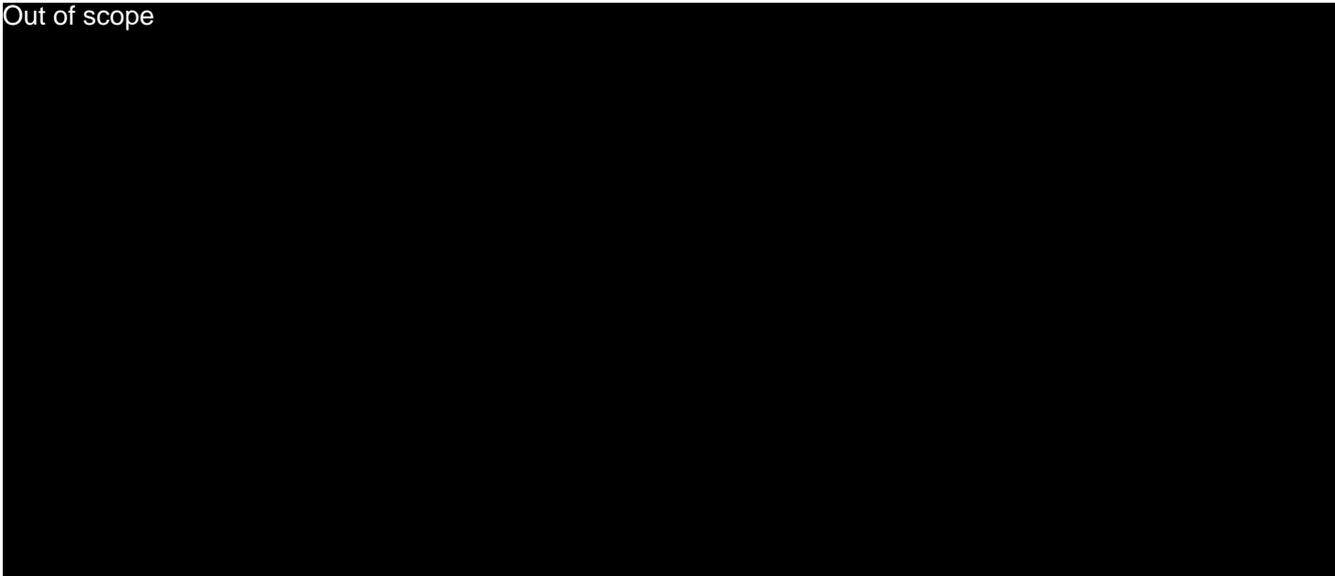
Out of scope



DISCUSSION

Powerline Treatments

Out of scope



Out of scope

Recommendation 32 - Reclosers

The VBRC recommends that reclosers are disabled on all SWER lines for the six weeks of greatest risk in every fire season (one shot to lockout), and that reclosers on 22kV feeders are set to only one reclose attempt on all fire ban days.

In contrast to the previous Victorian policy, South Australia has had a disconnection policy in place with respect to severe bushfires. ETSA Utilities, in its Bushfire Risk Management Manual provided to Energy Division on a confidential basis, adopts a risk-based approach to adjusting the operation of reclosers on its SWER lines. As part of the Manual, ETSA Utilities has developed a risk matrix for determining disconnection or resetting reclosers to one shot to lockout (Attachment B). Where resetting is required, the relevant multi-shot switching devices are put into non-auto operation generally within one hour of notification unless disconnection of supply is carried out immediately.

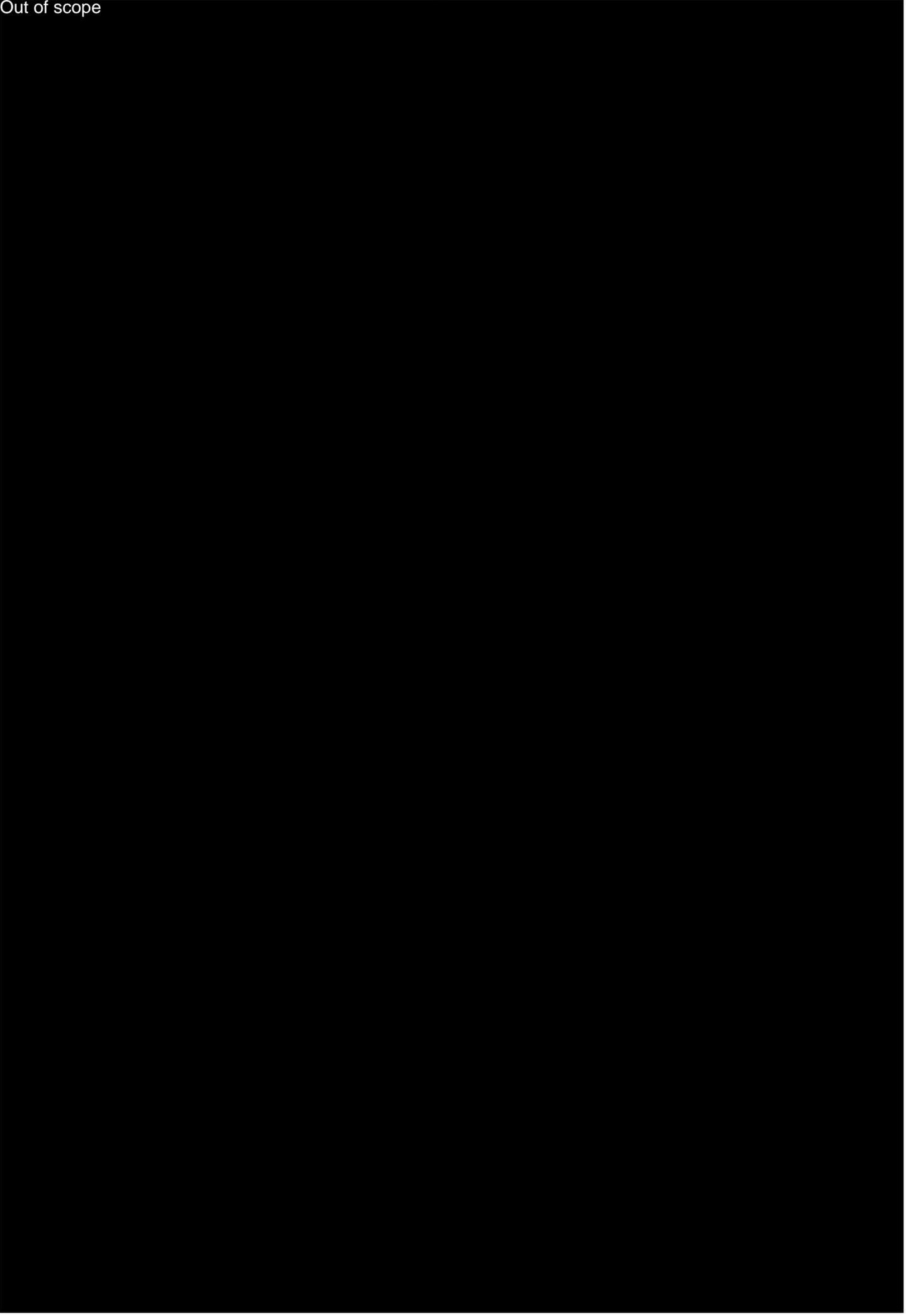
The Safety, Reliability and Maintenance Technical Management Plan (SRMTMP) for ETSA Utilities references its Bushfire Risk Management Manual. It is a licence condition that ETSA Utilities has its SRMTMP approved annually by ESCOSA on the recommendation of the Office of the Technical Regulator (OTR). In addition, a compliance audit is conducted against the SRMTMP each year.

In addition, section 53(1) of the *Electricity Act 1996* permits ETSA Utilities to cut off supply of electricity to any region, area, land or place if it is, in the opinion of ETSA Utilities, necessary to do so to avert danger to persons or property. In carrying out a function under this section ETSA Utilities, if practical, should consult with the Chief Officer of the South Australian Country Fire Service before doing so.

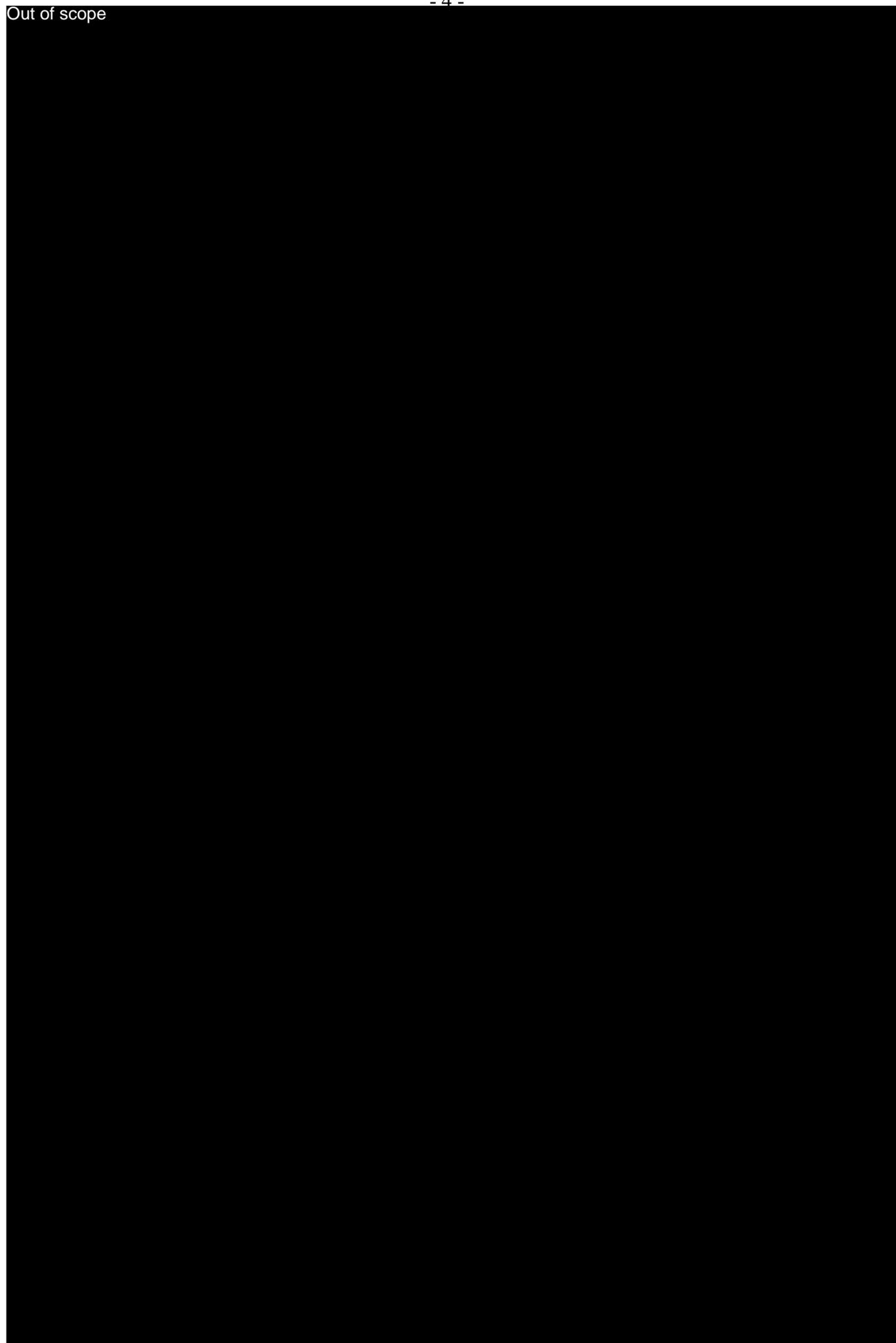
Energy Division notes the VBRC recommendation, compared to ETSA Utilities' risk-based approach, may result in a significant number of lengthy power outages on hot days as most incidents are transitory (ie flying tree debris or lightning) and lines would require visual inspection prior to power being restored.

Out of scope

Out of scope



Out of scope



RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that you note:

1. This briefing;
2. That ETSA Utilities has provided its information and manuals on a confidential basis, and that these are not for wide distribution or public dissemination; and
3. Energy Division will monitor the response of the Victorian Government to the VBRC recommendations.

Vince Duffy
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ENERGY DIVISION

August 2010

Contact name:	Brian Massey
Contact number:	[REDACTED]

VICTORIAN BUSHFIRE ROYAL COMMISSION

FINAL REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

ELECTRICITY-CAUSED FIRES

RECOMMENDATION 27

The State amend the Regulations under Victoria's *Electricity Safety Act 1998* and otherwise take such steps as may be required to give effect to the following:

- the progressive replacement of all SWER (single-wire earth return) power lines in Victoria with aerial bundled cable, underground cabling or other technology that delivers greatly reduced bushfire risk. The replacement program should be completed in the areas of highest bushfire risk within 10 years and should continue in areas of lower bushfire risk as the lines reach the end of their engineering lives
- the progressive replacement of all 22-kilovolt distribution feeders with aerial bundled cable, underground cabling or other technology that delivers greatly reduced bushfire risk as the feeders reach the end of their engineering lives. Priority should be given to distribution feeders in the areas of highest bushfire risk.

RECOMMENDATION 28

The State (through Energy Safe Victoria) require distribution businesses to change their asset inspection standards and procedures to require that all SWER lines and all 22-kilovolt feeders in areas of high bushfire risk are inspected at least every three years.

RECOMMENDATION 29

The State (through Energy Safe Victoria) require distribution businesses to review and modify their current practices, standards and procedures for the training and auditing of asset inspectors to ensure that registered training organisations provide adequate theoretical and practical training for asset inspectors.

RECOMMENDATION 30

The State amend the regulatory framework for electricity safety to require that distribution businesses adopt, as part of their management plans, measures to reduce the risks posed by hazard trees—that is, trees that are outside the clearance zone but that could come into contact with an electric power line having regard to foreseeable local conditions.

RECOMMENDATION 31

Municipal councils include in their municipal fire prevention plans for areas of high bushfire risk provision for the identification of hazard trees and for notifying the responsible entities with a view to having the situation redressed.

RECOMMENDATION 32

The State (through Energy Safe Victoria) require distribution businesses to do the following:

- disable the reclose function on the automatic circuit reclosers on all SWER lines for the six weeks of greatest risk in every fire season
- adjust the reclose function on the automatic circuit reclosers on all 22-kilovolt feeders on all total fire ban days to permit only one reclose attempt before lockout.

RECOMMENDATION 33

The State (through Energy Safe Victoria) require distribution businesses to do the following:

- fit spreaders to any lines with a history of clashing or the potential to do so
- fit or retrofit all spans that are more than 300 metres long with vibration dampers as soon as is reasonably practicable.

RECOMMENDATION 34

The State amend the regulatory framework for electricity safety to strengthen Energy Safe Victoria's mandate in relation to the prevention and mitigation of electricity-caused bushfires and to require it to fulfil that mandate.

ATTACHMENT B
(CONFIDENTIAL)

Classified as confidential in accordance with section 11(2) of the Electricity Act 1996 and not subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act

