

# Media Release

**The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP**

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
Minister for Suburban Development



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## MAKING VICTORIA'S POWER DISTRIBUTION NETWORKS MORE RELIABLE

The widespread power outages during the 2018 Australia Day weekend heatwave were due to failures in privately-owned distribution networks, not lack of energy supply, a new report has confirmed.

Minister for Energy Lily D'Ambrosio today released the Victorian Government review, which has made 15 recommendations to prevent similar events from happening in the future.

The recommendations focus on clearer and faster communications to customers and require distribution businesses to put in place low-cost, innovative solutions to manage high-demand periods.

These recommendations include that distribution networks:

- inform the Government of their plans to address network weaknesses
- communicate with DHHS and vulnerable customers (such as those on life support equipment) about extreme weather events that might cause an outage
- develop a single website for Victorians providing up-to-date information before, during and after outages.

Electricity distribution businesses have committed to implementing all the review's recommendations.

Following the January outages, the Labor Government brokered a deal with Powercor, CitiPower, United Energy, Ausnet Services and Jemena to provide a \$5 million relief package to around 50,000 affected customers.

Customers off supply for between three and 20 hours received \$80 while those between 20 and 30 hours received up to \$180.

These one-off payments went above and beyond the Guaranteed Service Level payments, which normally only apply where customers lose supply for at least 12-18 hours, rather than three hours.

For more information on the review, visit [energy.vic.gov.au](http://energy.vic.gov.au).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

*"This review confirms what we already know: that the widespread outages on Australia Day were the result of failures in the privately-owned distribution networks, not supply."*

*"Only Matthew Guy thinks privatising energy companies has been good for consumers."*

*"Distribution businesses need to plan more carefully for heatwaves and make sure their networks are more reliable and resilient before next summer."*