

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Wednesday, 30 June 2021

PROTECTING VICTORIA'S ENERGY SECURITY AND YALLOURN MINE

While the situation at Yallourn is now stable, it remains critical to find a permanent solution to the flooding and ensure Victoria's energy supply is secure. The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to work with EnergyAustralia to protect the Yallourn Coal Mine.

As a temporary measure, today EnergyAustralia has discharged water into the Latrobe River, which will free up storage on the Yallourn site in the event of more rain. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has approved this discharge and will continue to monitor the water and environment in the vicinity.

Recent rainfall has been managed and the rain forecast for the next week is not anticipated to cause any additional short-term energy supply issues. EnergyAustralia is working to temporarily seal cracks in the Morwell River Diversion to lessen the chances of further damage should water levels rise again.

Proposals to bypass, inspect and repair the Morwell River Diversion to secure energy supply from the Yallourn Power Station are being urgently developed. Relieving pressure on the Morwell River Diversion is essential to complete the damage assessment and undertake critical, permanent repairs.

Experts are examining a range of other water management issues as part of the current process. To allow the long-term repair works, water needs to be diverted.

To date, this has required the construction of a temporary dam to reduce water levels in the Morwell River Diversion, diverting water using specially installed pipes, and using other areas of the mine to store excess water which can be pumped from the mine to the Latrobe River.

EnergyAustralia has a ground monitoring radar onsite to provide improved real-time data to help inform the immediate work and the longer-term repair strategy. Geotechnical engineers are constantly monitoring and assessing the site.

The Government is continuing to work through the implications of these options. Multiple agencies are working on these issues, from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Southern Rural Water, Environment Protection Authority and the Earth Resources Regulation.

Yallourn power station's usual generation capacity is up to 1480 MW and typically supplies approximately 22 per cent of Victoria's electricity demand. The power station is currently operating at a reduced capacity.

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

"The situation at Yallourn is now stable, but it remains critical that we find a long-term solution to protect the mine and ensure Victoria's energy security."

Quote attributable to Minister for Resources Jaclyn Symes

"EnergyAustralia is getting on with the immediate work required to reduce risks at the Yallourn mine, under the oversight of Earth Resources Regulation and other relevant government agencies."