

# Media Release

## Energy Safe Victoria

29 July 2019

### ESV releases final report on power pole safety in south west

Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) has released its final report on the immediate risks impacting the safety of power poles in the south west.

In May, ESV released a draft report *The Condition of Power Poles in South West Victoria*.

The report came about after significant community concern following the St Patrick's Day fires in March 2018. Started by electricity assets, the fires destroyed a significant amount of property and livestock leaving property owners fearful that further fires may occur. Several community members questioned the adequacy of Powercor's maintenance regime, particularly its inspection and pole replacement practices.

The report detailed ESV's review of Powercor's arrangements to determine if there was an immediate risk to communities. Powercor's inspection practices were found to be adequate, however, the community was given the opportunity to provide their opinions on the findings through an open consultation process.

Several issues were raised around the adequacy of the regulatory regime, ESV's investigations of the St Patrick's Day fires and our response. Some changes were made before the report was finalised, however, ESV has provided a separate document with direct responses to the issues raised in the submissions.

"The submissions demonstrated a need to build trust and understanding of ESV's role," Director of Energy Safety Paul Fearon said.

"Clearly we need to engage more effectively with the community and I look forward to working with government to improve how we do this.

ESV has commenced the next phase of its investigation which will examine issues affecting the long term sustainability of power pole maintenance in the south west.

The submissions and the full response is available at [www.esv.vic.gov.au](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au)

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