

POWERLINE BUSHFIRE SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING No. 04

Held: Tuesday 12 September 2017, at 9:00 am

Location: Level 5, Building 2, 4 Riverside Quay, Southbank

Attendees:	Status	
David Harris	Member	Chairman
Claire Noone	Member	Principal, Nous Group
Gail Moody	Member	Director, Wilmin Consulting
Gary Towns	Member	Director, Facio Pty Ltd
Gaye Francis	Member	Director, R2A Pty Ltd
Tony Marxsen	Member	Director, Marxsen Consulting Pty Ltd
Paul Fearon	Observer	Director of Energy Safety, ESV
Ian Burgwin	Observer	General Manager Electrical Safety & Technical Regulation, ESV
Ashley Hunt	Observer	Powerline Bushfire Safety Program, DELWP
Tom Hallam	Observer	General Manager Regulation and Network Strategy, AusNet Services
Steven Neave	Observer	General Manager Electricity Networks, CitiPower and Powercor
Neil Watt	*Observer	Technical Director REFCL Project, Electricity Networks, CitiPower and Powercor
Siham Knowles	*Observer	GM Network Engineering, AusNet Services
Robert Skene	Secretariat	Senior Technical Advisor, ESV
Apologies:	Status	
Steve MacDonald	Member	Engineering Support Manager at Orion NZ Ltd

*Part time – for the DB presentations and ESV's presentation on the process for exemptions.

Agenda item Discussed:

Item	Matter	
Part A	Committee Members and secretariat only	
1	Committee Discussion	David Harris
Part B	Committee Members and Observers	
2	Introduction	David Harris
3	DB progress to-date	Steve Neave/ Tom Hallam
4	ESV exemption process	Ian Burgwin
5	HV Customers on a REFCL protected network	Secretariat
7	Discussion	David Harris
8	Future meetings	David Harris

Part A - Committee members and secretariat only

1. Committee Discussion

1.1. Committee procedural

The Chair discussed the continuing need to have a Member only session at the start of each quarterly committee meeting.

Committee decision: Passed without dissent.

The Chair reflected on the role of the committee which is limited to the provision of advice on matter referred to it by the Director of ESV, and that reference may be limited in extent. It was also discussed that references to the committee by the Director may also include matters beyond a direct exemption application by a distributor.

The Chair requested that members consider processes which streamline the provision of advice to the Director.

An example of such a process might include; following the initial receipt and consideration of a referral by the committee, that the members consider having the secretariat identify which member(s), or others persons, were best placed to provide expert analysis on elements of the referred matter. In this case the advice would then be delivered to the members for consideration by the committee as a whole.

Action Members were asked to give consideration and provide comment to the Chair to its intended process for processing exemptions following a study of the intended ESV process.

1.2. Register of Engagements – Committee Members

The Secretariat provided an update on declarations of engagements received from members.

It was agreed that on the completion of an engagement that the member notify the Chair to ensure that the engagement list remains current.

Standing Action: Members to provide advice to the Secretariat by email on matters where there may be a perceived conflict of interest.

1.3. Meeting starting time

For the convenience of members, a revised committee meeting starting time of 10:00am was discussed.

Committee decision: Passed without dissent.

1.4. REFCL contingent project applications

A brief summary was provided on the status of the applications lodged with the AER was requested and provided by the secretariat.

Information regarding the Ministers offer to provide some funding going forward for HV customers connected to a REFCL protected network was also discussed, including the Ministers suggestion that ESV should consider extending time lines to broker the most cost effective solutions.

Part B - Committee Members and Observers**2. Introduction****2.1. Attendance and apologies**

The Chair informed the meeting that Steve MacDonald had extended his apology for nonattendance at this meeting.

2.2. Previous meeting minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting were circulated out of session without comments received from Members or Observers.

The Chair requested Members approve the minutes as a record of the meeting held on 13 June 2017.

Committee decision: Passed without dissent.

2.3. Outstanding actions from previous meetings

Meeting date	Matter	Action	Status
13/06/2017	2.3 Outstanding Actions	Members to consider the content of the process/protocol for the provision of advice to the DoES, when requested.	No progress
	2.3 Outstanding Actions	The secretariat to produce an outline of the process/protocol for the provision of advice to the DoES, when requested.	Progress waiting input from Members.
	3. Electricity Distribution Business - progress to-date	PBSP to advise on the use of 33kV cables for all new Powerline Replacement Fund projects submitted by the distributors.	PBSP reported to the meeting that none of the current projects have utilized 33kV cable, but that PBSP would be sympathetic to applications which did adopt a low capacitance standard cable.
Outcome legend			Open
			Closed

Standing Action: Secretariat to provide Members a list of matters where the industry is likely to seek relief from requirements with each meeting agenda.

3. Electricity Distribution Business - progress to-date

Tom Hallam and Steve Neave each separately provided updates on their businesses' progress in implementation of the requirements contained in the Electricity Safety (Bushfire Mitigation) Amendment Regulations.

3.1. Powercor

A PowerPoint presentation was provided on their REFCL program.

- **REFCL Trials – Current Status**

- Gisborne zone substation

- Powercor reported that this trial site has been in service since April 2017, and was expected to be in operation over the 2017/18 summer fire season.

- Powercor reported that there had been a cross country fault caused by a failed surge diverter at this zone substation since the last meeting. The surge diverter was said to be from the family of acceptable types. Powercor have initiated a review to confirm acceptable types of surge diverters.

- Woodend trial zone substation.

- Powercor reported that this trial site was undergoing commissioning, with compliance testing expected to take place in October 2017. This station is expected to be in operation over the 2017/18 summer fire season.

- Subsequent to the stress testing Powercor reported that there have now been four HV cable failures with a program initiated to replace all of that vintage cable (steam cured) at Woodend. Powercor advised that there is little of that cable at other of their Tranche 1 zone substations.

- Powercor have also identified a need to replace certain current transformers as their accuracy is not suitable to produce the required REFCL performance.

- Camperdown zone substation.

- Powercor reported that they expected that this zone substation would be in operation for the 2017/18 summer fire season.

- Implementation Timetable.

- Powercor explained that there has been a small revision to the last timetable presented to the committee, with the Maryborough and Castlemaine now scheduled to be in service later in 2018.

- Conformance Testing.

- Powercor explained that they are continuing their work on a conformance testing regime, addressing the aspects identified in the draft summary paper commissioned by ESV and produced by Tony Marxsen for the TWG.

- Tranche 1 program

- Contingent project applications to the AER.

- Powercor advised that a key consideration associated with their applications was the treatment of HV customers who were adversely affected by REFCL caused voltage limits higher than those specified in the electricity distribution

code. The AER have provided a partial allowance of network side solutions for HV customers in their determination.

Powercor reported that dialogue with tranche 1 HV customers has commenced to investigate solutions to the expected higher voltage. Discussions were said to commence with government regarding the Minister's proposed funding support for HV customers so as to determine if that funding is applicable to tranche 1 customers.

- Timeline
Powercor provided a slide showing the current expected timelines for REFCL introduction into relevant zone substations. The slide included the number of HV customers connected to each zone substation.
- Exemptions requests to legislated requirements.
Discussion was held on Powercor's submission to ESV in August 2017 where it was proposed that underground or insulated overhead polyphase electric lines be exempt from the requirements to be REFCL protected. Powercor signaled that a further request for a time extension was possible flowing from the government's HV customer assistance program or from the installation of an isolating substation at a HV customers' site.

Action: Copy of the Powercor's Power Point presentation to be distributed to Members and Observers and made available on the ESV PBSC web page.

3.2. AusNet Services

A PowerPoint presentation was provided on their REFCL program.

- Woori Yallock trial zone substation.
AusNet Services advised that the REFCL at this zone substation was currently out of service as a result of the network capacitive current exceeding the current rating of the REFCL arc suppression coil.

AusNet Services reported that prior to being removed from service on July 4, the REFCL operated for 55 earth faults, 88% transient faults and one cross country fault. The REFCL sensitivity was said to be below that specified in the regulations.

Action: AusNet Services are to confirm if the cross country fault was the result of a surge diverter failure.

AusNet Services reported that site preparations have commenced for the installation of a second REFCL, so as to achieve the performance specified in the regulations, with the station expected to return to full REFCL operational status in quarter 1, 2018.

- Tranche 1 program
AusNet Services provided a slide showing the status for all of the tranche 1 zone substations. In addition to construction having commenced on the Barnawartha and Rubicon A zone substations, all the other tranche 1 stations were said to be in the design phase.
- Timeline
A further slide was provided by AusNet Services showing the current expected timelines for REFCL introduction into relevant zone substations

and showing which zone substations require a considerable rebuild associated with the introduction of a REFCL (Myrtleford, Kinglake and Seymour).

AusNet Services said that the slide was not intended to show the network hardening, balancing activities, etc. status associated with each zone substations, as those works were on-going and integrated with other replacement and maintenance works.

The slide did not show the HV customer work associated with the introduction of REFCLs, which was said to be site specific.

The committee requested that AusNet Services include the number of HV customers connected to each zone substation on future presentations.

Action: AusNet Services to include the number of HV customers connect to each of the zone substations in future timeline presentations.

Contingent project applications to the AER.

AusNet Services advised that their tranche 1 application had been determined by the AER.

It was reported that the treatment of HV customer sites was subject to negotiation following AusNet Services obtaining access to HV customers' sites. Those conversations were said to be well advanced.

AusNet Services advised that there were no HV customer exemption applications envisaged at this stage for tranche 1 RFCL zone substations.

- Exemptions requests to legislated requirements.
Discussion was held on AusNet Services submission to ESV for exemptions associated with underground and insulated cable feeders or URD estates downstream of an isolating transformers supplied from the Kalkallo zone substation so as to limit the total network capacitance which would offer a considerable cost saving.

3.3. REFCL status – 2017/18 summer period.

The committee expressed a view that it would be useful to have the electricity distribution businesses report on which zone substations would have REFCLs installed and available for this coming summer period.

Action: AusNet Services and Powercor to provide a report to the December committee meeting on the expected REFCL availability for the 2017/18 summer period.

Action: Copy of the AusNet Services Power Point presentation to be distributed to Members and Observers and made available on the ESV PBSC web page.

4. ESV exemption process

Ian Burgwin presented a paper outlining the ESV's expected process for administering exemption applications associated with both the Electricity Safety Amendment (Bushfire Mitigation Civil Penalties Scheme) Act 2017 and the 2016 amendments to the Electricity Safety (Bushfire Mitigation) Regulations 2013.

Action: Copy of the ESV Power Point presentation on the Process for the Administration of Exemption Requests paper to be distributed to Members and

Observers and made available on the ESV PBSC web page.

5. HV Customers on a REFCL protected network

5.1. Responses to the survey report.

The secretariat provided an update on the responses received by ESV on the report, noting that each electricity distribution business had provided a response and that these responses had been posted on the ESV web page.

6. Discussion

6.1. Committee Member raised matters

6.1.1.1. Exemption applications

Discussion regarding exemptions was held, with members expressing their expectations that exemptions should include:

- clear reference in the application to which section of the Act and Regulations the exemption was sought,
- that the exemption be specific and not general,
- that the exemption not rely on assumptions,
- no increase in the risk as a result of the granting of the exemption,

Members also expressed a desire that electricity distribution businesses engage early in the process of applying for an exemptions so as to provide sufficient time for consideration of the application.

6.1.1.2. Electricity distribution business Update reports

Members requested that electricity distribution businesses include in their December PBSC meeting presentations;

- an update on their progress on HV customers
- more granularity on the REFCL deployment, including other matters that affect the timelines not yet provided in updates, including site specific issues,
- details of covered conductor failures associated with the REFCL program,
- update on the progress in powerline replacement in Electric Line Construction Areas,
- update and time lines for the deployment of SWER ACRs.

Action AusNet Services and Powercor to consider including the additional information sort by members in their update report to the December committee meeting.

6.2. Other matters

There were no matters referred to the committee by ESV for advice.

The Chair thanked the presenters for interesting and informative papers.

7. Meetings

7.1. Next meeting

Meeting scheduled for 12 December, 2017, starting at 10:00am and finish at 12:30pm, preceded by a “meet and greet” at 9:30 am.

7.2. Subsequent meetings

Confirmation was given that subsequent meetings are scheduled for;

13 March 2018, 12 June 2018, 11 September 2018, and 11 December 2018.

It was also recognised that additional ad hoc Member meetings may be scheduled as a consequence of the committee having been requested to provide advice to the Director of ESV.

The Chair thanked the presenters for interesting and informative papers and closed the meeting.

Meeting closed at 12:00 pm.

List of Attachments

- A. Powercor presentation,
- B. AusNet Services presentation (as amended post meeting),
- C. ESV presentation (as amended post meeting)