

Essential Services Commission championing social licence for energy transmission upgrades

Victoria's energy regulator is seeking input on principles that should apply when energy companies access land to undertake early works for transmission projects.

Significant upgrades to Victoria's energy transmission grid will be necessary for Victoria to transition to net zero emissions by 2050. But social licence for these upgrades is threatened when energy companies fail to engage in a timely and respectful way with impacted communities.

Essential Services Commission CEO Dr John Hamill said a key pressure point during transmission upgrades occurred when energy companies sought to access land for the purpose of early works for transmission builds.

"Landholders expect transmission companies to respect their land by following reasonable and transparent processes," he said.

Dr Hamill said the commission has published draft principles for transmission companies to follow, to ensure that landowners are engaged with effectively and respectfully.

"We will engage with a wide range of stakeholders in developing the statement of expectations, including landowners, community organisations and energy companies," he said.

Dr Hamill said following the statement of the expectations, the commission would develop an enforceable access code.

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