VNI West Community Reference Group

December 2025

Chairperson's summary and update

CRG BRIEF UPDATE

The VNI West Community Reference Group (CRG) met for its thirteenth meeting on 16 December 2025, which brought together community members and senior representatives from VicGrid. Eleven community members joined the closed door discussion in the first hour to prepare questions for visiting guests. Notes for this session were recorded in confidence.

For the second part of the meeting, CRG community members were joined by Mick Douge (VNI West Program Director), Mark Gledhill (VNI West Senior Project Manager), Amy Pepper (VNI West Lead, Communications, Engagement and Social Performance), Ali Driscoll (VNI West Senior Advisor Engagement).

The CRG had the opportunity to ask questions of the meeting guests. Key topics of discussion included:

- A project update noting key achievements for the VNI West project for 2025
- The augmented reality tool demonstration which is designed to help transmission line neighbours understand what the visual impact might be once it is constructed.
- Changes at VicGrid – As of November 1, VicGrid has been separated from the Department of Energy, Environment, and Climate Action and took on shared network roles from the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)
- Changes to the Victorian Access Regime
  - Moving from an open access regime to closed access system through the implementation of Renewable Energy Zones to make sure projects align with VicGrid's expectations.
  - Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines set the minimum expectations and expectations for how project developers will recognise stakeholders and deliver social values.
- Changes to the number of projects and transmission infrastructure – The Victorian Transmission Plan has been finalised with a 15 year outlook to coordinate infrastructure at the right time and place.
- The cost of the project which is still quoted to be $7.6billion
- Improvements to engagement with non-Registered Aboriginal Party organisations
- Impacts of the project on landholder lending
- Professional advice payments for valuations and mental health support
- A pilot program for farm gate mental health support

The CRG continues to act as a place for two way communication between community and TCV. Please get in touch if you would like to be involved.

The minutes for the December meeting will be reviewed and endorsed by the CRG at its next meeting.

This report has been prepared by:

RM Consulting Group Pty Ltd trading as RMCG

135 Mollison Street, Bendigo Victoria 3550

(03) 5441 4821 — rmcg.com.au — ABN 73 613 135 247

Offices in Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales and Queensland

Key RMCG contact

Claire Flanagan-Smith

0427 679 044 — clairef@rmcg.com.au

Document review and authorisation

Project Number: #1871

Doc Version	Final/Draft	Date	Author	PD Review	BST Review	Release approved by	Issued to
1.0	Draft		M. Ludeman C. Flanagan-Smith				