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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Communities encouraged to share local insights as environmental assessments continue

Transmission Company Victoria (TCV) is encouraging landholders and community members to share their local knowledge of environmental and social values to help inform technical studies for the VNI West Environment Effects Statement (EES).

A series of community sessions will be held across the project area in August. These sessions will give people the chance to speak directly with TCV and technical experts, learn more about the EES process, and share insights about local land use, environment, and community values.

TCV spokesperson Mick Douge said community input is critical to a comprehensive and accurate EES for VNI West.

“Local people understand the places in which they live and work better than anyone,” Mr Douge said.

“Their knowledge helps ensure our assessments reflect real conditions on the ground and what matters to the people who live in the area.”

The EES is Victoria’s most rigorous and transparent environmental assessment process. It describes the project, explains why it’s needed, and examines potential environmental and social effects.

The process is administered by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) on behalf of the Minister for Planning, who determined in April 2024 that an EES would be required for VNI West.

VNI West will connect Victoria and New South Wales with high-voltage transmission infrastructure to support renewable energy and maintain grid reliability. The project must complete the EES and obtain Victorian and Commonwealth approvals before construction can begin.

The VNI West EES is currently being prepared, with technical studies underway on topics like ecology, agriculture, traffic and transport, landscape and visual amenity, social factors, and Cultural Heritage.

“These studies help identify potential impacts and explore how they can be avoided, reduced or managed,” Mr Douge said.

There are two formal stages of EES engagement. The first took place in November 2024, when draft scoping requirements (investigation topics) were released for public comment. The second stage will be the public exhibition of the EES, expected in late 2026.

Engagement during the current EES preparation phase is informal but plays an important role.

“Community feedback has already helped refine the project easement and identify areas for initial environmental investigation,” Mr Douge said.

“We’re now encouraging anyone with local knowledge — whether it’s about native vegetation and animals, roads, heritage or other values — to come along to an upcoming EES community session or get in touch in a way that suits them.”

**Community sessions will be held in:**

- **Kerang:** Tuesday 19 August, 3–6pm, Kerang Memorial Hall
- **Murrabit:** Tuesday 26 August, 3–6pm, Murrabit Public Hall
- **Charlton:** Wednesday 27 August, 9am–12pm and 3–6pm, Charlton Park Complex
- **Stawell:** Thursday 28 August, 3–6pm, Stawell Entertainment Centre

To share your local knowledge via our interactive map, or for more information on the EES, visit [www.transmissionvictoria.com.au](http://www.transmissionvictoria.com.au).

Community members can also email [enquiries@transmissionvictoria.com.au](mailto:enquiries@transmissionvictoria.com.au) or call 1800 824 221 (free call).

**ENDS**

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**About VNI West**

VNI West is a major project to build a new transmission line between Victoria and New South Wales. It will harness renewable energy in both states and maintain the reliability and security of electricity supply as coal-fired power stations retire and energy demand continues to grow. As coal-fired power stations retire, new renewable energy generation will be built to fill the supply gap. New transmission lines are needed to connect this power with our homes and businesses and improve reliability. In Victoria, a project easement of 70m wide along most of the route has been identified. The easement runs from Bulgana to near Kerang and then across the border into New South Wales.

**About TCV**

Transmission Company Victoria (TCV) is a company created by AEMO Victorian Planning to progress the VNI West transmission project. TCV will discuss the VNI West transmission project with landholders, Traditional Owners and the community to understand local concerns and ensure that commitments made in the early stages are captured and honoured across the life of the project. TCV will provide early project updates and will work with the community on this important transmission line. For more information, head to [www.transmissionvictoria.com.au](http://www.transmissionvictoria.com.au).