

Snowy 2.0 Transmission Connection Project

Bushfire Fact Sheet

January 2024



Background

The Snowy 2.0 Transmission Connection Project (the Project) is being undertaken across two state-managed tracts of forest and national park: Bago State Forest and Kosciuszko National Park (KNP). The Project works are located within the Snowy Valleys Council (SVC) Local Government Area (LGA) and the Southern Slopes Fire Area.

The vegetation surrounding the construction area is classified as Vegetation Category 1 by the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) Guide for Bushfire Prone Land Mapping. Vegetation Category 1 is considered to have the highest combustibility and greatest likelihood of forming large fires with embers, classifying it as the highest risk for bushfire.

A Bushfire Management plan was prepared for the Project in consultation with the NSW RFS, Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW), Forestry Corporation of NSW (FCNSW) and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). It is part of the Project Emergency Plan and can be found on our [website](#).

The Unique Nature of Managing Bushfire Risk in Kosciuszko National Park

When considering how to minimise risk and safely respond, there are a number considerations specific to the Project:

- The use of firefighting chemicals is prohibited within 50m of the banks of Yarrangobilly River,

Talbingo Reservoir and Three Mile Dam

- Planned (i.e., not during an emergency situation) track widening, and vegetation disturbance is prohibited on a number of access tracks within the greater project area, due to the presence of threatened species habitat
- A range of Aboriginal and historic heritage sites exist within the greater project footprint and should be considered during emergency planning and management
- Several sensitive areas that contain protected animals exist within and around the project area. Wherever practicable, consideration must be given to minimising impacts on these areas during emergency events.

Managing Bushfire Risk During Construction

The teams working on the project will operate in a way that minimises the risk of bushfire. Should a bushfire occur, the people on site have the knowledge, processes and equipment to safely respond.

To maintain this focus there are weekly environmental inspections by the team on site, and monthly reviews of inspection outcomes, including assessment of Asset Protection Zones (APZs), training and preparedness. This ensures a constant focus on the steps that minimise risk and maintain preparedness should a fire start on or around the site.

LUMEA™ is Australia's leading infrastructure and energy services provider focused on servicing the renewable energy industry. Sitting as part of the Transgrid group, Lumea focuses on developing competitive commercial solutions and applying new technologies for customers across the eastern states of Australia.

Fire Prevention

Potential ignition sources during construction have been identified and action has been taken to address them:

Hot works / Grinding / Welding works: On days where the Fire Behaviour Index (FBI) is over 24 (preparedness code Red, Grey or Black) strict prohibitions on certain activities including hot works and fire risk works will be enforced. In the event of an inconsistency between works colour code requirements, the higher colour code requirement prevails. This is in line with Transgrid's Hot Work and Fire Risk Work Procedure, Fire Danger Ratings (FDR), FBI and approved exemptions.

Vegetation clearing: Fuel loads resulting from vegetation clearing are reduced by distributing some trees for habitat and mulching others for erosion and sediment control.

Management and use of on-site vehicles: Regular maintenance of vehicles and pre-start checks will be undertaken. The use of vehicles on site is covered by the Hot Work and Fire Risk procedures. Extinguishers are in all vehicles.

Discarding of cigarettes: Designated smoking areas are in place, cleared of fire fuel sources.

Fuel leaks and spills: Spill response procedures are in place, including immediate action to stop the spill, prevent spread, notification and clean-up.

Storage of flammable goods: Minimum 40m clearance between chemical storage facilities and woody vegetation have been designed.

Clearances between structures and vegetation: Establishment and maintenance of a dedicated APZ surrounding the 330kv Switchyard in accordance with the NSW RFS Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019, and minimum 20m clearances between construction compounds and surrounding vegetation.

Lightning strikes on transmission lines: Earthing of transmission line structures for protection in the event of lightning strikes including earth wires and earthing fixtures is in place.

Ongoing maintenance is a key focus to manage bushfire risks. This includes:

- Ongoing vegetation management including

regular inspection and maintenance of woody vegetation inside the transmission line corridor to ensure safe clearances between overhead conductors and vegetation are maintained

- Ongoing maintenance of buildings prior to the commencement of bushfire seasons including:
 - Clearing leaf litter and debris from gutters, garden beds, roofs and external decks
 - Ensuring external walls, eaves and roofs are sealed and painted and window fly screens are in a serviceable condition to reduce ember attack potential
 - Scheduled testing and maintenance of firefighting equipment and alarm systems, where installed
- Ongoing maintenance of fire breaks and trails in consultation with NPWS and RFS
- Continuous consultation and communication with RFS, FRNSW, FCNSW and NPWS

Resources to Manage Fire Risk

Two main emergency assembly areas will be established for the Project, the UGL Switchyard Assembly Area (Maragle) and the UGL Lobs Hole Assembly Area. Each emergency assembly area will include:

- A minimum 20,000L dedicated firefighting water supply
- Three 12m x 3m site offices with gravel hardstands and maintained APZs

Firefighting supplies and equipment are available at the main Project work sites:

- Four-wheel drive (4WD) vehicles with towable water units, equipped with pumps and hoses
- Fire extinguishers
- Hand tools including fire rakes and shovels
- Dedicated firefighting water supplies

If needed, the Chief Warden will draw on external firefighting resources in consultation with NPWS and FCNSW.

Bushfire Awareness and Training

Induction of staff, visitors, contractors and site users is an important part of managing the

Project's fire risk. Induction briefings include:

- Site context, including the landscape, vegetation, environment, and fire history
- Fire weather awareness and preparedness requirements
- Permissible activities
- Response to emergency warnings from fire authorities
- Fire reporting and response actions
- Onsite and offsite emergency arrangements including evacuation procedures

In addition, daily staff briefings and toolbox talks are held for everyone on site. This will include briefings about fire risk and required actions for that day. Fire danger boards are set up and updated daily with NSW RFS FDR.

Fire awareness training will be rolled out for specific members of the UGL, Lumea, Transgrid, sub-contractor teams. This includes:

- Familiarisation and training in the safe and

effective use of firefighting equipment

- Competency-based training for emergency equipment operation
- Site familiarisation for RFS, FRNSW, FCNSW and NPWS prior commencement of fire season including emergency drills and liaison with personnel.

Emergency Response

In the case of a fire starting on or near site, our teams will do the following:

- Take on designated responsibilities including Chief Warden – Incident Controller, until replaced by a responding external fire authority Incident Controller
- Rapid response to extinguish minor fires and prevent escalation by trained site personnel
- Follow specific procedures when firefighting near powerlines and switchyards/substations. These are detailed in the Project Emergency Plan.



What to expect during construction

Timing:
2023–2026



Workforce:
Depending on project activities, up to 50 people staying and working in Tumbarumba.



Vehicle movements:

- Road works along Elliott Way to upgrade the access roads into the switching station site.
- Additional traffic movement along Elliott Way (except for during school bus travel times).
- Some heavy vehicle movements along Elliott Way, these will be signposted.



Activities:
Activities will include environmental surveys, bulk excavation, civil construction works, electrical equipment deliveries, vegetation clearing, access track works, tower construction and stringing of new lines.