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\$28 million investment in vegetation management

Eastern Victoria's electricity distributor SP AusNet is investing \$28 million in its bushfire mitigation and vegetation management programs as one of the keys to preventing outages and bushfires across its network.

This year's investment is boosted by an additional 25 per cent on the previous year, continuing the company's aim to complete its bushfire mitigation and vegetation work before the commencement of the declared bushfire season.

SP AusNet spokesperson Joe Adamo said a strong vegetation management plan was one of the keys to preventing outages and bushfires.

"We are committed to completing our bushfire mitigation and vegetation work that meets all regulatory requirements and ensures a high level of preparedness for our network," Mr Adamo said.

"Our preparedness includes vegetation and asset management programs, in addition to inspections and other strategies as part of our ongoing bushfire mitigation program.

"Through regular inspections, pruning, clearing and education, we are working to reduce the risk factors that could damage electrical assets or interrupt the supply of electricity.

"All of these programs will enable us to reach our bushfire mitigation index level of zero," he said.

Mr Adamo said a large part of effective vegetation management was to continually consult with councils, local communities and landowners and this helps SP AusNet obtain access to vegetation while ensuring a safe clearance level can be met.

"SP AusNet continues to communicate with communities about the need for proper vegetation and management to ensure a safe environment," he said.

"Tree clearing around powerlines is an essential part of the safe and reliable operation of our networks.

"We recognise the need to protect the ecosystems in which we operate and always aim to minimise environmental impact, reduce our carbon footprint while still continuing to meet all compliance obligations," he said.

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