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South Gippsland upgrade continues

SP AusNet is making significant progress in upgrading South Gippsland's backbone powerlines running from the Morwell Terminal Station to Phillip Island, via Leongatha and Wonthaggi.

This investment will improve the safety and reliability of the electricity supply to residents and businesses in South Gippsland, particularly during the summer tourist season, when the population swells.

A significant rise in demand during the peak tourism period in Phillip Island and Wonthaggi can place the South Gippsland network at risk of failure, potentially resulting in load shedding or blackouts.

Since 2008, SP AusNet has replaced more than 66 kilometres of powerlines along with hundreds of powerpoles and supporting electricity infrastructure to increase the security of the network.

Work continues with new poles being laid out along the Bass Highway for Leongatha to Koonwarra Road intersection to start the replacement of a further 14.3 kilometres of powerline joining Leongatha to Wonthaggi.

SP AusNet's Craig Beilby managing the project said that preparations are progressing well and, weather permitting, the project should be completed by the 2014/15 summer.

"We're in set-up phase of the project, laying out the first of 70 powerpoles that will also be upgraded as part of our project to replace 14km of powerlines joining Leongatha to Wonthaggi," Craig said.

"I'd like to thank the local property owners that have been accommodating with our works so far and thank them in advance for their patience during the planned outages necessary to replace the powerlines.

"Early next month, we will starting the replacement work and depending on the weather condition, would hope to be finished by years end," he said.

In addition to the powerline replacement program to meet the seasonal spike in electricity demand at Phillip Island, SP AusNet has provided temporary generators at the Phillip Island zone substation during the peak loading season from late December until late January each year.

These generators provide an additional 4MW of electricity into the island's electricity network to help manage the demand in the brief period when holiday makers can triple the population of Phillip Island.

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