

4 June 2014

Helicopter powerline inspections take flight

SP AusNet will be flying its helicopter along powerlines near Seymour, Benalla and Yea for the next 3 days, photographing electricity assets as part of the company's maintenance and bushfire mitigation programs.

Helicopter inspections allow the company to photograph a large volume of assets in challenging terrains and diverse landscapes across its electricity network spanning 80,000 kilometres in eastern Victoria.

SP AusNet's Regional Customer and Community Manager, Craig Velt, said that aerial inspections help the company achieve a 37- month inspection cycle of electricity assets in high bushfire risk areas.

"With the helicopter, we can quickly fly along our long regional powerlines in challenging landscapes to photograph assets for our technical specialist to assess and then direct our field workers to undertake the appropriate action required," Mr Velt said.

"These helicopter inspections are a part of our extensive inspection and maintenance programs to ensure we are prepared for the coming bushfire season," he said.

SP AusNet operates the helicopter between 8am and 4pm, flying at approximately 350 feet with custom blades that minimise noise.

This year, SP AusNet will inspect approximately 135,000 power poles and assets through ground and aerial inspections – utilising modern devices such as drones – in addition to clearing vegetation from approximately 82,000 spans of powerlines.

"Our inspection programs help determine our extensive maintenance programs across our network comprising of 385,000 power poles and 49,816 kilometres of powerlines," Mr Velt said.

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About SP AusNet

SP AusNet is the largest diversified energy network business in Victoria, owning and operating more than \$10 billion of electricity and gas distribution assets, including the state-wide electricity transmission network. The company also has a non-regulated division, Select Solutions, providing utility services.

Headquartered in Melbourne, Australia, SP AusNet employs more than 2100 people to service 1.3 million consumers and is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX: SPN) and the Singapore Stock Exchange (SGX-ST: X04).