

Media Release



12 October 2016

1400 Update

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Power supplies steadily being restored, but more work ahead

All efforts are being made to repair the outstanding damage caused by Sunday's wind storm, and restore the power supply to all affected customers.

This progress update is current as of 1400 on Wednesday 12 October.

We apologise for the extreme inconvenience being experienced by several thousand customers, who have been without power since Sunday. We wish to assure customers that we are leaving no stone unturned in our efforts to restore supply to all customers as quickly as possible.

The gale-force winds that hit Victoria on Sunday caused some huge trees and branches to fall across powerlines causing a significant number of power outages.

The AusNet Services network, which services most of the higher and treed areas east of Melbourne, has recorded more than 1,300 individual faults or damage on our network since Sunday, and more than 67,000 customers have been hit by power disruptions.

The worst affected areas stretch from Kinglake to Berwick, and in particular the Dandenong Ranges and the Upper Yarra Valley.

All available resources have been working around the clock since Sunday to safely restore power. As many crews as possible have been called in from other areas, leaving only the minimum needed to maintain public safety. More than 250 line workers are in the field tackling faults at present.

As at 2pm on Wednesday, we still have approximately 7,500 customers off supply.

In some cases, as we repair one fault we find another further down the network. If anyone identifies lines or other assets that may still be unsafe, please call our electricity faults line on 13 17 99.

In some areas, it remains difficult to provide accurate forecasts of when individual customers will have their power restored. Our best estimates are being regularly updated on the Outage Tracker page on our website (www.ausnetservices.com.au), this has all the latest information on the status of all outages.

Since Sunday we have sent about 130,000 SMS messages to affected customers whose mobile phone numbers we have. We have also been specifically tending to registered life support customers through regular contact, these are being managed individually.

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AusNet Services is working closely with the State Emergency Service and other relevant authorities to coordinate our emergency response and minimise the impact on the community.

We understand there are some customers without power who may be feeling vulnerable, or who may be unable to get the information they need to manage their situation. We encourage those who know people without power, whether they be family, friends or neighbours, to keep in contact or to visit to ensure their welfare. Local authorities are also providing support services for those in need (www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au and www.cardinia.vic.gov.au).

We are working towards having the majority of customers back on supply by the close of business today (Wednesday). We are also prioritising the restoration of supply to registered life support customers, and we expect to have all these customers on supply by this evening.

A small number of customers with single premise faults, such as service wires down, may not all be restored until later in the week.

Again, we apologise for the inconvenience which we know being without power presents, and we thank customers for their patience and cooperation while we work as fast as we can to restore power.

Ends...