

Terms of reference – Independent Review of Christmas 2021 power outages

This independent review (the Review) is commissioned by the Hon Bill Johnston MLA, Minister for Energy, following the power outages that impacted the community from 24 to 28 December 2021.

1. Scope of review

The Review will examine and report on the reasons for the outages impacting communities in the South West Interconnected System (SWIS) between 24 and 28 December 2021 (Review Period).

The Review will include but will not be limited to the following topics:

- a) Cataloguing of outages, including location, time, duration, number of affected customers and any relevant outage characteristics (including repeat outages in a specified location), during the Review Period.
- b) Reasons for each outage catalogued under (a), including the suitability of planning and preventative measures taken by Western Power in the lead-up to the Review Period.

This should consider:

- (i) network and operational planning;
- (ii) network design;
- (iii) asset management and maintenance;
- (iv) asset performance;
- (v) load forecasting;
- (vi) historical network performance; and
- (vii) any other relevant factors.

for parts of the network that experienced outages during the Review Period.

- c) Western Power's operational response to faults in the Review Period compared to good electricity industry practice, including any relevant risk assessment and/or other internal decision frameworks that informed restoration approach, including community impact.
- d) Western Power's compliance with regulatory, statutory and market obligations, including those relating to Emergency Services under both (b) and (c).
- e) Western Power's communication and engagement with external parties in the lead-up to, during and post the Review Period, including:
 - (i) The Coordinator of Energy (the Hazard Management Agency for an electricity supply disruption);
 - (ii) The Department of Fire and Emergency Services;
 - (iii) The Australian Energy Market Operator;
 - (iv) Local Government Authorities; and
 - (v) The Community.

2. Reporting

The key deliverable from the Review is a Final Report which must contain, as a minimum:

- a) the findings of the review, having considered items 1(a) to (e) above and any other relevant matters; and
- b) recommendations that address the findings documented in 2(a).

Draft reports or other materials may be prepared by the Review team, with the agreement of the Minister.

A final report will be provided to the Minister by Monday 14 March 2022 (or as otherwise agreed by the Minister and the Independent Reviewer) for his consideration, followed by tabling in Parliament.

3. Term

The Review will commence on Monday 31 January 2022, with a report and recommendations made to the Minister for Energy by Monday 14 March 2022.

4. Independent Reviewer

The Review will be conducted by an Independent Reviewer, Ms Michelle Shepherd.

Ms Shepherd will be supported by an independent technical advisor, with representatives from Energy Policy WA providing secretariat support. The Review team will be located at Energy Policy WA, Level 1, 66 St Georges Terrace Perth.

5. Contracting and financial arrangements

The Independent Reviewer will be engaged by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety¹, with the costs of engagement to be recouped from Western Power.

6. Powers of reviewer

Ms Shepherd will not be granted any statutory authority to compel Western Power or other entity to provide documentation.

The Minister for Energy will outline to the Western Power Chair his expectations regarding the entity's cooperation with the Review team and its information requests prior to the commencement of the Review.

7. Information and confidentiality

The Review will operate independently of the Minister for Energy, Energy Policy WA and Western Power.

All information shared with the Review team is to be held as commercial in confidence, and be returned to relevant entities on completion of the Review.

¹ This may occur through Energy Policy WA, a sub-department of the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, which is authorised under the *Procurement Act 2020* to procure in its own right.