



NEW SOUTH WALES

# MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday, 19 April, 2009

## Ian Macdonald

Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Energy,  
Minister for Mineral Resources, Minister for State Development

### Five point plan to power NSW's future

The NSW Government is delivering a five-point plan to further secure Sydney's power supply which will complement the largest energy infrastructure program in the State's history, Energy Minister Ian Macdonald said today.

"We are delivering the biggest energy program in the State's history, with a series of projects underway right across NSW to put in place the infrastructure needed for major economic growth in the future," Mr Macdonald said.

"Almost \$18 billion is proposed to be spent and over the next five years one third of the State's electricity infrastructure will be replaced, renewed or upgraded."

Minister Macdonald said the five-point plan includes:

- Stronger laws to protect vital electrical supply cables. The protection given will equal or exceed that given to rail and telephone infrastructure.
  - Changes to the Electricity Supply Act
  - Cost recovery for cable damage
  - Making Dial-Before-You-Dig and notification of works time and place compulsory
  - Reversing the onus of proof in cable damage above 33kV
  - Mandatory notification of cable damage
  - Changes to Planning laws to improve cable management plans
- A proposed \$18 billion investment on electricity infrastructure over the next five years, including a five fold increase in 132,000 Volt and 11,000 Volt underground cable replacements on EnergyAustralia's network - totalling \$1.2 billion and \$960 million respectively.
- A \$800 million investment in the CityGrid project, which includes work to complete the City West Cable Tunnel and City North Zone substation, as well as the building of three other major zone substations and 50km of high voltage cables.
- A multi-million dollar project installing next generation protection equipment for the four major transmission cables into the northern part of the City. This involves the installation of 10 kilometres of fibre optic cable from Lane Cove to the CBD.
- A requirement for Government buildings and infrastructure to regularly test and prove back-up power systems are working and sufficient. A best practice program for private sector CBD landlords.

“This \$18 billion expansion of the electricity network is expected to generate 3,700 jobs,” Mr Macdonald said.

“For example, EnergyAustralia’s proposed \$8.5 billion expansion of the network is expected to generate 2,500 long term jobs including 1,000 apprentices and engineering graduates over the next five years.

“For Integral Energy, a proposed \$2.8 billion expansion of its network is expected to generate approximately 600 jobs, including 300 new apprenticeships over the next five years.

“For Country Energy, a proposed \$4 billion expansion of the electricity network is expected to generate 600 jobs including 300 apprentices, trainees and engineering graduates over the next five years.

“We need these apprentices to help us deliver our largest investment in the electricity network in the State’s history and currently EnergyAustralia is the largest single employer of apprentices in NSW.

“Other plans include building an extra level of backup supply into the CBD electricity network by 2014 to make Sydney the first CBD in Australia to achieve that standard, matching major international cities like New York.”

Minister Macdonald said a range of measures are already in place to protect the power supply.

“EnergyAustralia is investing \$3 million a day to upgrade and renew the electricity network and more than \$3 million a week is being spent on a program of preventative maintenance, monitoring and repairs,” he said.

“Staff have also been placed in the two main Sydney substations for 16 hours a day.

“It’s important to remember that about 70% of all power interruptions are currently due to factors beyond the control of the networks, such as people accidentally digging up cables, car accidents involving power lines, and trees falling.”

**Media contact: Lyndall Derrig 0400 462 447**