

Customers yet to claim \$382,000 in compensation for 2018 Australia Day outages

26 March 2019

Electricity and gas

Almost 5000 Victorian households and small businesses owed money after the power went out over the 2018 Australia Day weekend have not cashed their cheques, according to an audit by the state's energy regulator.

The Essential Services Commission says around 50,000 eligible customers were sent cheques by their [energy distributor](#) following the outages on Sunday 28 and Monday 29 January 2018 – but 4,625 are yet to be processed.

Commission chairperson Ron Ben-David says of the almost 100,000 Victorian customers who lost power over the 2018 Australia Day weekend, around half were eligible to receive the one-off compensation.

'Payments ranged from \$80 to \$180 based on how long customers were without power, with some customers reportedly being off supply for days during an extreme heat spell,' he said.

Customers of Powercor, spanning the western suburbs and western Victoria entire west, have yet to cash cheques totalling nearly \$200,000 while customers of United Energy covering the southern suburbs and Mornington Peninsula have \$114,000 worth of uncashed cheques.

The state's electricity distributors funded the \$5 million heat relief package as part of an agreement with the Victorian Government. The government also asked the commission to conduct an [audit of payments made under the agreement](#)

following a review.

The heat relief payments are an addition to the required 'guaranteed service level' payments which may be payable when a customer's supply goes out for more than 12 hours (under 6.3 of the [Electricity Distribution Code](#)).

Customers who think they're eligible for a payment but haven't received a cheque should contact their distributor, which is listed on their electricity bill.

Outstanding compensation not yet claimed by customers

Distributor	Unbanked cheques	Outstanding compensation
AusNet Services	461	\$37,260
CitiPower	158	\$12,720
Jemena	241	\$19,280
Powercor	2,426	\$198,800
United Energy	1,339	\$114,460
Total	4,625	\$382,520

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[Heat relief audit 2019](#)

Over the 2018 Australia Day weekend (Sunday 28 and Monday 29 January) 94,712 Victorian customers lost power at some point. In 2019, we audited five Victorian electricity distributors to

ensure that eligible customers were adequately compensated.

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