

To whom it may concern,

Firstly, and with great respect, we applaud the State Government's intention to reduce the likelihood of bushfires being caused by power line faults.

Pacific Energy VIC Hydro is a small company that owns and operates two hydroelectric power stations in Victoria with a total output of approximately 5 megawatts.

We attended the recent bushfire mitigation plan review briefing at the Essential Services Commission.

We would like it known that we would be greatly impacted by the Rapid Earth Fault Current Limiter (REFCL) technology that is proposed to be implemented in rural areas.

We have had a study conducted that has provided us with the information that we will indeed need to 'harden' our installations, and which included indicative costs to carry out the work.

We understand that it is part of the REFCL implementation plan to require high voltage customers be liable for the costs associated with the impact of putting the REFCL system into practice.

Initially we were given the impression that the State Government would meet the costs associated with the impact the REFCL will have on our installations, but have since learnt in the recent briefing at the ESC that this is not likely.

Those costs are much more than our annual profits and we therefore would be unable to absorb them.

In all likelihood under the current implementation plans where there is no financial compensation covering the impact of the REFCL we would find that our business would become untenable.

We await further information regarding this serious matter with interest.

Sincerely

**Paul Gardiner**

Manager



**Pacific Energy Victorian Hydro**

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