

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Suburban Development



Getting Things Done.
Making Things Fair.

Sunday, 11 February, 2018

COMPENSATING VICTORIANS AFFECTED BY POWER OUTAGES IN JANUARY

Victorians affected by power outages due to extreme heat on Sunday 28 January will be compensated with one-off payments of up to \$180 by the end of February.

Electricity network businesses Powercor, CitiPower, United Energy, Ausnet Services and Jemena will provide a \$5 million package to around 50,000 people who lost power on the day networks recorded their highest ever residential demand for a Sunday.

Customers who were off supply between three and 20 hours will receive \$80 while those between 20 and 30 hours or more will receive up to \$180 – the equivalent of around three to seven months off their annual distribution charge.

These one-off payments go well beyond the Guaranteed Service Level payments, which normally only apply where customers lose supply for at least 12-18 hours – rather than three hours.

Approximately 43,000 more customers will get a payment than required under regulatory obligations. In addition distribution businesses will meet claims for financial loss, which remain available to all customers regardless of how long they were off supply.

Extreme heat and humidity on January 28 saw significant increases in residential demand – that led to localised outages on parts of the distribution network.

The Andrews Labor Government is working with AEMO and the energy industry, to ensure Victoria's energy supply and security needs are met during extreme weather events.

As part of a detailed review, distribution networks have agreed to reassess how they can improve communications with customers during heat events and increase the use of smart demand management programs to avoid customer outages.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"We know how frustrating this was for many Victorians – affected customers deserve to be compensated for the inconvenience and we made sure that happened."

"We've worked with the private power distribution companies to deliver this for thousands of customers affected by this extreme weather event."

"Network businesses will bear the full costs of this package and I'm pleased they've gone above and beyond the regulatory rules to support their customers."