

Media Release



30 May 2023

Failed power plan forced onto farming communities

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) has slammed the Andrews Government's decision to steamroll ahead with transmission developments in Western Victoria following the announcement of a new corridor for the proposed VNI-West project.

VFF President Emma Germano said Victoria's Minister for Energy Lily D'Ambrosio is using extreme powers to come over the top of farming communities and force transmission towers to be built on their land.

"Farmers are being ignored by the Andrews Government in the planning for renewable energy and transmission development across the state."

"The VFF called on the government to put a pause on these projects, take over their planning and get the policy settings right so communities are respected and landholder rights are protected."

"Instead, they have done the complete opposite by giving AEMO unfettered powers to send the bulldozers over our farms."

"The Minister is using autocratic powers to rush these projects meaning there is no requirement for a cost benefit analysis or competitive tender. Victoria's energy rules aren't just broken, they're rotten."

Ms Germano said the Andrews Government and AEMO's proposed Option 5A for the VNI-West project opened new communities to transmission development without consultation.

"Yet again, the government has allowed AEMO to announce a new transmission route in the dead of the night, without one jot of consultation with the farmers that could be impacted."

"The Minister's order states that she has consulted with the Premier, the Treasurer and AEMO. Nowhere does it say she has consulted with the farming communities that will be impacted by these projects."

Ms Germano said the government had failed to properly plan these projects and as a consequence, regional communities could not support them.

"It's clear the government is willing to allow these projects to be done on the cheap and nasty because they have failed to plan the transition to renewable energy."

"We want to be able to say that Victoria's plan for transmission is the best in the country. That it takes into account our food and fibre security as well as our energy security at a time when the cost of living is biting every Victorian family."

"Instead, we have no plan for our transmission network and as a consequence the projects currently underway should not have the support of any Victorian."

ENDS

Media Contacts: Ryan Moloney, VFF, 0400 874 589