

**Question on Notice
No. 338
Asked on Thursday, 21 March 2024**

**MR L MILLAR ASKED MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND CLEAN ECONOMY JOBS
(HON M DE BRENNI)**

With reference to Ergon Energy's public notice on Thursday, 11 January 2024, for a planned outage in the Longreach district for works scheduled between 8.30 am to 2.30 pm on a day temperatures were predicted to reach 40 degrees celsius. Given the vital need for air conditioning for all residents, particularly the elderly, sick and frail, and workplace health and safety issues for Ergon Energy workers—

Will the Minister advise why Ergon is regularly scheduling planned works in outback Queensland during the summer months and in the hottest part of the day?

ANSWER

Ergon Energy's electricity network consists of 143,000km of overhead powerlines, 9,000km of underground cables and 1 million power poles.

Ergon Energy has an extensive program of planned works which is required to ensure the safety of the community, its staff, and the network. These essential maintenance works continue all year round, including during the summer months. Delaying planned maintenance to cooler periods is not always possible due to the requirement to ensure the safety and security of the Network.

Whenever there is need to switch off the power so that crews have safe access to the network and can get the job done as efficiently as possible, Ergon Energy Network will give customers as much written notice as possible to plan for the interruption.

Customers who were impacted by the planned outage in the Longreach district on 11 January 2024, were sent written notice on 19 December 2023.

This planned outage was required to carry out repairs on pole stays which were identified as unserviceable during other works in this area. The stays were repaired to ensure the network is safe and to prevent future unplanned outages or danger to the community.

The job was scheduled to utilise available resources within designated safety timeframes.

The outage impacted 19 customer connections between 8:30am and 10:43am – almost four hours shorter than the original outage notification given to customers.

While any interruption is frustrating, planned maintenance reduces the risk of unplanned outages which can impact the community for longer periods of time.