

General Information Notice Contract Delivery

Notice Number: **GI04_21**

12 March 2021

Subject: **Contestable Vegetation Management - Trial Commencement**

Dear ASPs and Vegetation Contractors,

Ausgrid has been working with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (**the Department**) and Councils to introduce a 12-month trial under the NSW ASP Scheme Rules framework for contestable vegetation management works across all Local Government Areas (**LGA**) in Ausgrid's franchise area. We are pleased to announce the 12-month trial will be commencing from 15 March 2021.

The trial will allow Councils to directly engage accredited and authorised Contestable Vegetation Management ASP/1X companies to complete contestable vegetation works near Ausgrid's Low Voltage (**LV**) overhead network, in accordance with Standard Vegetation Control (**SVC**) requirements in Ausgrid's Electrical Safety Rules (**ESR**).

As outlined in the information session a number of you attended on Thursday 14 January 2021 via Microsoft Teams, the *WorkCover - Work Near Overhead Power Lines – Code of Practice 2006 (Code of Practice)* mandates that tree and vegetation work within the No Go Zone (**NGZ**) must only be performed by an authorised person with written approval of the Network Operator.

ASP/1s and vegetation management companies interested in undertaking SVC near Ausgrid's LV overhead network must meet the following requirements:

- the company undertaking the work must be accredited with *the Department* and authorised with Ausgrid as a Level 1X Accredited Service Provider company.
- each of the company's employees who will be conducting SVC near Ausgrid's LV overhead mains must be individually registered with *the Department* under the accredited company and authorised with Ausgrid as a Class 1X Non-Electrical Accredited Service Provider.
- vegetation workers must have a Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control qualification, including elective units relevant to the type of vegetation control work being conducted, and hold current mandatory safety training to work near Ausgrid's network as per Ausgrid's ESR, ASP Training Matrix and ES4 Accredited Service Provider Authorisation Network Standard.
- have a written risk assessment, safe systems of work and an authorised safety observer.
- if determined by the written risk assessment, consult with the network operator and work in compliance with any conditions imposed by the network operator; and
- work within the parameters specified below.

Parameters for undertaking contestable vegetation management works:

- restricted to LV overhead mains only (both bare conductor and Low Voltage Aerial Bundled Conductor).
- no work near the high voltage overhead network.
- work in accordance with SVC as defined by Ausgrid's ESR at all times.
- work that cannot be completed in accordance with these criteria will either require an outage or be referred back to Ausgrid to complete; and
- network safety incidents must be reported to Ausgrid's Network Compliance & Authorisations function immediately followed by a written report within two business days of the incident.

Councils must only engage companies who have been accredited by the *Department* and authorised by Ausgrid to undertake SVC near Ausgrid's LV overhead mains. All companies authorised to undertake SVC work near Ausgrid's network will be listed on Ausgrid's website.

Accreditation and authorisation process

The following steps are required to obtain accreditation from *the Department* and Ausgrid authorisation to undertake SVC works near Ausgrid's LV overhead network:

- Apply for and receive company and individual employee accreditation as Contestable Vegetation Management ASP1/x company/workers with *the Department*.
- Apply for company authorisation with Ausgrid through the Pegasus ASP Company portal.
 - Input required company certificates into Pegasus as prompted by the system.
 - Contact ASPAuthorisations@ausgrid.com.au to arrange an initial company interview;
 - Enter into a Contestable Vegetation Management Authorisation Agreement with Ausgrid.
- Apply for individual worker authorisations assigned to the authorised company through the Pegasus ASP Worker portal.

Once companies and their employees are accredited and authorised to complete contestable vegetation management works near Ausgrid's LV overhead they will be listed on Ausgrid's website for Councils to refer to.

The above requirements and parameters may be updated based on lessons learnt and in consultation with Councils and ASPs during this trial.

In addition, as part of the trial oversight and assessment, Ausgrid is required to provide quarterly reporting to *the Department* providing an update on trial progress covering, safety data, observations, opportunities for improvement, volume of work completed, and lessons learnt etc. Ausgrid will be working with Council Vegetation Managers to seek input for quarterly reporting, which are likely also to require your input.

If have any questions or require any further information on the Contestable Vegetation Management trial please contact Jacob Bayley on (02) 4325 8582 or email ASPAuthorisations@ausgrid.com.au.

If you would be interested in attending another briefing session, please register via the below link by Close of Business Friday 26 March 2021. Subject to interest, another briefing session may be scheduled or alternatively, we will contact you directly.

Information session EOI registration link:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=KCQwERBPFEyhf7Nou4KFPVSY7ZjrDbFGp-X-pBNCOxRUMjBQRERaVTg1UTJWUIIQTIBQTDIaN083WS4u>

**Regards,
Contract Delivery – Ausgrid**

Website Links:

Department of Planning, Industry & Environment Landing Page:

<https://energy.nsw.gov.au/government-and-regulation/legislative-and-regulatory-requirements/asp-scheme-and-contestable-works>

Department of Planning, Industry & Environment ASP/1 Application Form:

<https://energy.nsw.gov.au/media/1416/download>

Ausgrid – Authorisation information:

<https://www.ausgrid.com.au/ASPs-and-Contractors/Ausgrid-Authorisation>

Ausgrid – Electrical Safety Rules:

<https://www.ausgrid.com.au/ASPs-and-Contractors/Technical-documentation/ESR>

Ausgrid - ES4 Accredited Service Provider Authorisation:

<https://www.ausgrid.com.au/-/media/Documents/Technical-Documentation/ES/ES4-Accredited-Service-Provider-Authorisation.pdf>

Ausgrid – Contestable Vegetation Management information

<https://www.ausgrid.com.au/veg-trial>

WorkCover - Work Near Overhead Power Lines – Code of Practice 2006 (Code of Practice):

https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/52832/Work-near-overhead-power-lines-code-of-practice.pdf