

FACTSHEET

LOAD SHEDDING



WHAT IS LOAD SHEDDING?

Load shedding is used to assist in maintaining system stability and the balance between supply and demand on the national electricity supply system. It involves reducing consumption by specific amounts by turning off the electricity supply to groups of customers.

When there is a shortfall in the electricity supply, there can be a need to reduce electricity consumption very quickly to an acceptable level, or risk the entire electricity network becoming unstable.

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and the electricity industry work together to minimise the impact on the community, particularly major health facilities, emergency services and public transport. However these services can still be affected and should have business continuity arrangements in place.

In general, all electricity consumers should be prepared for power outages, including businesses with processes that are dependent on electricity supply.

WHY DOES LOAD SHEDDING OCCUR?

Load shedding can sometimes be required when there is an imbalance between electricity consumption and electricity supply.

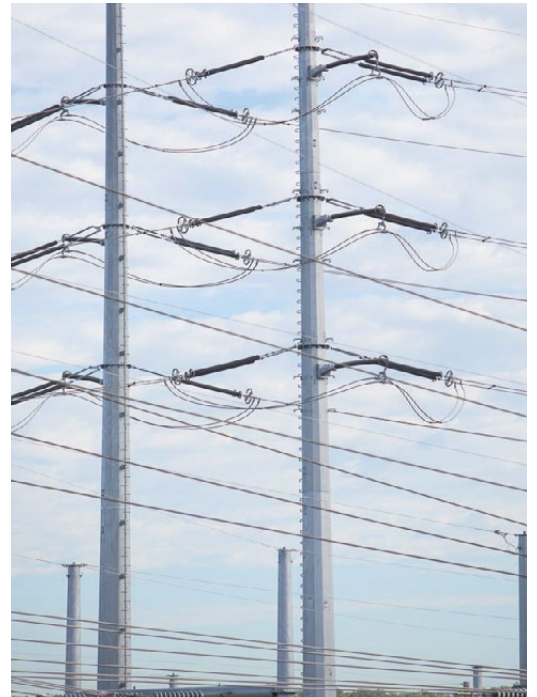
A number of factors can contribute to an imbalance. For example, an unexpected loss of electricity generation plant - which could be due to a technical fault or damage to transmission lines or other system assets - in combination with extremely hot weather and high levels of consumption can lead to a need for load shedding to restore system operation to secure levels.

HOW WILL I FIND OUT IF MY AREA/HOME IS AFFECTED?

Your local distribution company will have to carry out these intentional interruptions at very short notice so it's not possible to advise customers in a particular area in advance.

AEMO makes the decision on how much electricity consumption needs to be reduced and the electricity distribution companies work out how this will be done on a local level. Arrangements vary from state to state, but the overall objective is to minimise the impact on any one group of customers.

Wherever possible this is done on a localised rotational basis, but sometimes that's not an option. For example, if the supply-demand balance changes rapidly, then load shedding can happen almost instantly.



FURTHER INFORMATION

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