

Victoria Announces Storm Review

A review of emergency planning and response to this month's wind storms will further improve the ability of government, industry and the community to deal with such incidents, according to the Victorian Government. More than 420,000 residents across Victoria were left without power at the height of the storms on 2 April 2008, according to Energy Minister Peter Batchelor. The Government has announced a wide-ranging review that will examine the response to the wind storm by electricity distributors and retailers, emergency services and government departments and agencies. "The review will be conducted by the Emergency Services Commissioner Bruce Esplin and will ensure that we can learn from the recent storms and identify ways to improve our emergency response procedures," says Batchelor. Better communication with the Bureau of Meteorology and the media will be among the topics identified for the review, which will report jointly to Batchelor and Emergency Services Minister Bob Cameron by mid-August 2008. Batchelor says the review is in addition to the work to be carried out by the Essential Services Commission. "The Essential Services Commission will be reviewing the performance of the energy distributors as a matter of course. The Esplin review will look at the broader community preparation and response to extreme weather events," he says. Extreme weather events are predicted to become more frequent as climate change impacts occur, so the review will also identify opportunities to build greater community resilience for such events, says Batchelor.

[Source: essa news]