



MEDIA RELEASE

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Silent Safety from the Sky

TasNetworks will reduce cost and disruption by switching to aerial drone inspections.

The business currently uses helicopters to aerially inspect its distribution assets. Most of that work will now be done by drone, saving more than \$500,000 a year (about half the current expense).

TasNetworks CEO, Seàn Mc Goldrick, said overhead checks are crucial for spotting defects and keeping power lines as secure as possible.

“Tasmanians need electricity that’s safe, clean, reliable and affordable,” Dr Mc Goldrick said.

“We go airborne to help limit power outages and prevent bushfires. But we know helicopter noise can be disruptive - especially close to people’s homes and livestock.

“Using drones is more peaceful. It’s cheaper – which helps us keep power prices as low as possible. It’s safer, by avoiding low-altitude helicopter work. And using less aviation fuel cuts emissions, along with our transition to electric passenger vehicles,” he said.

Last year, a successful trial confirmed drones are suitable for inspecting many of TasNetworks overhead distribution lines. Drone images are often more detailed than inspecting by chopper – which ultimately boosts the quality of maintenance and helps prevent faults and outages.

Helicopter inspections will still be needed for emergency situations, aerial transmission inspections, some eagle nest surveys, and situations where TasNetworks needs to inspect a large section of network very quickly.

TasNetworks drones will be operated by specialist Tasmanian contractors from Fulcrum Robotics, and subject to the strictest privacy laws and regulations.

TasNetworks will continue advising customers of upcoming inspections in their area (whether by drone, helicopter, or a combination of both). People are asked not to approach drone pilots in the course of their work, which requires intense concentration.

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