



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Painstaking work ahead**

TasNetworks has warned that remaining power restorations are likely to be among the slowest and most complex so far.

TasNetworks field crews and contractors have worked tirelessly to restore power to about 150,000 Tasmanians since storm damage began. About 3,000 customers remain without power (across more than 100 separate outages requiring about 500 active jobs) – virtually all in the north and north-west.

As crews gain access to previously dangerous or inaccessible areas, more damage is being uncovered. Drone vision's also revealing previously unknown damage, presenting extra challenges and delays.

TasNetworks Acting Operations Executive, Tim Gowland, said the smaller outages that remain involve some of the worst storm damage, most complex repairs, and most difficult faults to access.

"We feel deeply for Tasmanians who've already gone several days and nights without power in their homes, businesses and farms," Mr Gowland said.

"As strange as it may sound - getting these last few thousand customers restored is probably going to be at least as challenging and painstaking as the 150,000 we've restored already.

"That's because these are often complex outages affecting a small number of customers, but needing a lot of time and crew resources to fix. Many are in isolated and hard-to-access areas.

"In any widespread outage recovery, the bigger and simpler outages get fixed more quickly; the smaller, complex and more isolated ones involving heavy vegetation take a lot longer. People should therefore expect outage and affected customer numbers to start declining more slowly than they have been. The unfortunate reality is that some customers will be without power for many more days.

"Our TasNetworks team members and contractors have been working long hard hours, in extremely difficult conditions, to restore Tasmanians' power. They've been outstanding in their commitment and professionalism," he said.

On Thursday, TasNetworks brought in 22 interstate crew members from New South Wales to help accelerate recovery and restoration efforts. Starting yesterday and through the weekend, about 10 southern-Tasmanian-based field crews are travelling to join northern and north-western colleagues in restoring remaining customers as quickly as possible.

“We’re throwing absolutely everything at this. We still have a lot of hard work ahead. We’ll succeed more quickly with extra field crews available. We appreciate our southern people leaving their homes and families for a few days to help support our people and customers up here,” Mr Gowland said.

The impact of current storm damage is unprecedented in recent memory. While TasNetworks has confronted other storms affecting tens of thousands of customers in recent years, they’ve usually involved a few dozen separate outages, compared to more than 200 for much of the current event.

While Tasmanians are best-served by TasNetworks focussing solely on restoring power, the business is acutely aware of people still struggling without power, and needing new or ongoing support. Local councils and community organisations are operating support locations, with up-to-date information at [tasnetworks.com.au/Power-outages/Community-Support](https://tasnetworks.com.au/Power-outages/Community-Support).

Tasmanian Government Emergency Food Grants are available for households who’ve been without power for 72 hours (three days) or more. Tasmanians can apply online via the Department of Premier and Cabinet’s Community Grants webpage at <https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/.../emergency-assistance>. Anyone who needs help lodging an application or checking their eligibility can contact the Tasmanian Emergency Information Service (TEIS) on 1800 567 567.

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