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EnergyAustralia crews get set for the long haul

EnergyAustralia crews have started work on the final phase of a \$7 million upgrade to the electricity network supplying customers on the Central Coast's peninsula.

The upgrade has involved replacement of high voltage power lines supplying the Woy Woy and Umina zone substations, as well as refurbishment of the two substations. Once completed, the work will secure the electricity needs of almost 25,000 customers on the peninsula for the next 25 years at least.

EnergyAustralia's Executive General Manager Network, Geoff Lilliss, said the final stage of the project involved replacement of two major spans of overhead power lines across Woy Woy Bay and Phegan's Bay.

"While it certainly isn't without precedent, projects of this nature are reasonably rare across our network," Mr Lilliss said. "Our challenge is to replace these lines without creating major impacts for residents in the area or those who use these waterways."

Mr Lilliss said the water crossings were among the longest in EnergyAustralia's electricity network, which stretches from south of Sydney through to the Upper Hunter.

"The Woy Woy Bay span is nearly a kilometre, and the Phegan's Bay span is more than 300 metres," he said.

"Our project team will be taking a 'slow and steady' approach to this project, and we are confident that all of the power lines can be replaced without getting anyone's feet wet."

Replacement of the power lines begins this week and will continue through to March 28.

Marine traffic on Woy Woy Bay and Phegan's Bay will be delayed while the cables are being winched across the bays, and exclusion zones will be in place for public safety.

Mr Lilliss said the inconvenience to water traffic was unavoidable, but he added that residents living near the two waterways would not experience any interruptions to supply as a result of this work.

"We have been liaising closely with NSW Maritime to ensure that users of the waterways are well aware of the need to keep clear while the work is taking place, and we will have water traffic controllers on site at all times during the work," he said.

Owners of craft moored beneath the Woy Woy Bay span have also been asked to move their vessels while the work is in progress.

"We certainly apologise for any disruption this project will cause to daily movements on the water, but we're sure the community will appreciate the importance of completing this work to secure future electricity requirements for the peninsula," Mr Lilliss said.

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