

Barkandji Native Title Group Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC

1. How do you think communication could have been more effective in reaching people during the outages? Which agency do you believe is best placed to provide that information?

To ensure that all residents, particularly those in remote and vulnerable communities, receive timely updates, a more robust multi-channel communication strategy is required. This should include:

Diversified communication methods, ensuring messages are delivered via SMS, ABC Local Radio, community noticeboards, and local social media pages.

Frequent and localised updates, providing clear information tailored to the specific needs of each affected area.

Community hubs with generator power, where people can access information, charge devices, and seek assistance.

In terms of the agencies best placed to provide this information, Essential Energy and the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) should lead in delivering updates regarding outages, restoration efforts, and safety measures. However, NSW Police and the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) should also play a key role, particularly in remote areas where they have an established presence and strong community relationships.

The RFS, in particular, has extensive experience in emergency communication, logistical coordination, and community engagement. Their local brigades are well-connected and trusted within their communities, making them an effective channel for disseminating information, conducting welfare checks, and supporting emergency response efforts in isolated areas.

By integrating these agencies into a comprehensive and proactive communication framework, we can better safeguard our communities during future outages, ensuring no one is left uninformed or unsupported in times of crisis.