Transport for NSW

Response to Committee questions

Legislative Assembly Committee on Environment and Planning

Inquiry into the electricity outages affecting Far West NSW in October 2024

3 April 2025

QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1.

What actions were taken by Transport for NSW in response to the electricity outages emergency, particularly regarding the supply of generators, fuel and other equipment to the region?

    a. How was this support coordinated with other relevant agencies involved in the response?

    b. Which agency contacted Transport for NSW to get involved in the emergency response?

ANSWER:

During the electricity supply emergency, Transport for NSW activated its internal Emergency Management arrangements to provide information and ad hoc support to the Energy and Utility Services Functional Area Coordinator (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water) and the Regional Emergency Operations Controller (NSW Police Force). Transport for NSW's use of generators, fuel and other equipment occurred within business-as-usual arrangements.

Following the electricity supply emergency, Transport for NSW:
- Compiled a list of impacted Transport for NSW assets to feed into whole-of-government impact assessment reporting.
- Participated in a NSW Reconstruction Authority-led Regional Recovery Committee under the control of the appointed Regional Recovery Coordinator, which used the impact assessment process to identify priorities and sequence whole-of-government recovery activities.

a. As per NSW's Emergency Management arrangements, the Energy and Utility Services Functional Area Coordinator (within the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water) is the identified Combat Agency for electricity supply emergencies. The Energy and Utility Services Functional Area Coordinator performs the role of Electricity Incident Controller, managing the whole-of-government response to electricity system impacts and subsequent restoration in partnership with the Regional Emergency Operations Controller. Transport for NSW activates internal arrangements so that its 11 divisions and agencies comply with this whole-of-government coordination.

b. The Energy and Utility Services Functional Area Coordinator (within the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water).

QUESTION 2.

Does Transport for NSW factor the impact of remoteness and distance for many towns outside of Broken Hill in the Far West region when managing and responding to emergencies that impact access to roads?

    a. How does Transport for NSW's communication strategies factor in this issue of remoteness and distance when communicating messages during and after an emergency?

ANSWER:

With respect to managing and responding to the electricity supply emergency, Transport for NSW performs transport sector-specific activities within the whole-of-government coordination structure led by the Energy and Utility Services Functional Area Coordinator (within the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water). With respect to access to roads, Transport for NSW is the road authority for State roads, while individual councils are the road authority for Local and Regional roads. No State roads were closed as a result of the electricity supply emergency.

As per NSW's Emergency Management arrangements, during the electricity supply emergency, whole-of-government communications activities were led by the Energy and Utility Services Functional Area Coordinator (within the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water) and the Public Information Functional Area Coordinator (within the NSW Police Force). An example of a communications activity requested of Transport for NSW was to publish 'do not travel to Broken Hill' banners on relevant Transport for NSW websites.