

BESS Fire Safety

Yallourn Energy Security Precinct

EnergyAustralia recognises that the Yallourn Energy Security Precinct is proposed on the traditional lands of the Brayakaulung people of the Gunaikurnai nation. We recognise their continued connection to land, waterways and community and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Summary

- EnergyAustralia is committed to industry-leading safety standards for the proposed BESS projects at the Yallourn Energy Security Precinct.
- Our battery systems include continuous monitoring and fire management measures to protect the community and environment.

The Yallourn site's retirement in mid-2028 creates an opportunity to bring new development to the Latrobe Valley. EnergyAustralia is investigating a range of proposals at the site under the Yallourn Energy Security Precinct (YESP), including attracting data centre operators, utility-scale battery storage and gas-powered generation. These proposals would make use of the site's existing grid connections, gas pipelines and skilled local workforce. As part of the Precinct, EnergyAustralia is proposing to build two new BESS up to 1 Gigawatt / 8 hour in capacity, as well as a 700 Megawatt / 4 hour BESS. These projects may create up to 300 jobs during construction and represent a multi-billion investment in the local economy.

What we are proposing

EnergyAustralia prioritises effective management of health, safety and environmental risks at its assets. All battery projects need to comply with relevant guidelines and standards to reduce the risk of fire and enable their safe operation. The proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) projects as part of the Yallourn Energy Security Precinct (YESP) will utilise lithium-iron-phosphate (LFP) lithium-ion cell technology. While fires associated with this cell technology are rare and of lower risk than the cell-types used in typical electric vehicles and portable electronic devices, there are risks and hazards that need to be managed in their design, construction and operation. Designed to meet industry-leading safety standards, this battery system will be equipped with safety systems which continuously monitor, detect, isolate and alert the operators to any potential anomalies. This minimises the risk of a fire occurring and mitigates any risks of fires propagating between containers.

Managing bushfire risk

Bushfires pose a risk for sites where bushfire prone vegetation is present. As part of the planning approval process, a bushfire assessment will be completed. The assessment will follow the relevant guidelines, including Design Guidelines and Model Requirements for Renewable Energy Facilities (Victorian Country Fire Authority, 2026) (the Guidelines).

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To address the requirements of the Guidelines, the project includes the following fire and risk management measures:

- Providing a safe access and exit route for firefighting vehicles to access the site
- Providing an evacuation route and safety point
- Establishing and maintaining a defendable space around the site, to separate infrastructure from surrounding bushland and provide access around the site

Bushfire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan

As the project progresses, a Bushfire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan (BFEMEP) will be developed. This plan will include risk mitigation protocols during construction, including on days with high fire danger ratings; training for staff about bushfire risks and mitigation plans; measures to prevent bushfire ignition; and plans to ensure any bushfires are reported as soon as possible.

Next steps and find out more

We will continue working with Country Fire Authority and local brigades to understand and manage any bushfire risk through construction and operation. We will also continue to provide the community and local stakeholders with opportunities to provide feedback and input into the project with information about large scale lithium batteries and managing the fire risk. This will inform further planning, design, and construction of the BESS projects proposed as part of YESP.

Need more information?



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