

Friday, 15 June 2007

## Crews return home after powerful restoration effort

More than 300 electricity workers who joined EnergyAustralia crews to restore power following last week's storm disaster in the Hunter and Central Coast are today returning home to their families.

EnergyAustralia Managing Director George Maltabarow thanked the electricity workers, who came from Queensland, Victoria, the ACT and across NSW, for their efforts.

"These electricity crews did an outstanding job and on behalf of EnergyAustralia and the community, I thank them for their hard work," Mr Maltabarow said.

Mr Maltabarow said additional resources were called in soon after the storm – declared a Natural Disaster - hit the Hunter and Central Coast on Friday of the long weekend.

"This storm was the worst we have seen in 30 years and it caused unprecedented damage to our electricity network," he said.

"Almost immediately we brought in extra resources - specialist lineworkers, tree crews and installation inspectors - to help us rebuild the electricity network as quickly and safely as possible.

"These people worked in difficult conditions including rain, wind and rugged terrain to help EnergyAustralia crews restore power to more than 200,000 homes and businesses across the Hunter, Central Coast and in Sydney.

"The safety of crews and the community is always paramount and despite the difficult conditions, we maintained a 100 percent safety record."

The electricity workers came from eight companies: Energex in Queensland, Alinta, Powercor, SPI AusNet in Victoria, Actew-AGL in the ACT and Country Energy, Integral Energy and TransGrid from NSW.

The crews came from towns across NSW including **Taree, Forbes, Wollongong, Bathurst, Cowra, Parkes, Narromine, Dungog, Stroud, Coffs Harbour, Tweed Heads, Ballina, Grafton, Lismore, Casino, Gunnedah, Tamworth, Quirindi, Inverell, Goulburn, Mudgee, Dubbo, Coonamble, Warren, Queanbeyan and Gilgandra.**

Interstate crews came from **Broadmeadows, Shepparton and Benalla** in Victoria, **Brisbane** and **Canberra**.

Mr Maltabarow said power had been restored to almost all homes and businesses affected by the disaster.

"I again thank the crews for their hard work and wish them well as they return to their homes and families," he said.

**Media contact: EnergyAustralia News Pager 02 9966 7985.**