

VPRS 9823/P0002/?? files
representing material from
the legal department of
the former
State Electricity Commission of Victoria

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NB some transcript text is almost illegible due to incorrect focus: apologies M.G.

6007/67/60

Ref 845(30)
DME Ref 82/281
Copy to - CED(2)

10 APR 1984

Mr D G Collings
Shire Secretary
Shire of Mornington
PO Box 78
MORNINGTON 3931

Dear Mr Collings

I refer to your letter of 10 January 1984 (your reference 210/00 and 145/00) regarding the effect on water supply and sewerage services as a consequence of the disconnection of electricity supply on days of extreme fire danger.

I have discussed this matter with the State Electricity Commission which has advised me as follows:

"The Commission has prepared, as part of its overall strategy plan for bushfire prevention, operational contingency plans for the possible disconnection, on days of extreme fire danger, of areas where fire prevention works are not complete.

"These contingency plans are only to be used as a last resort action in areas identified to be at risk and only after extensive patrolling has verified the Commission's concern for a particular location. This action will be considered for Country Fire Authority zones when the Authority declares a day of 'Extreme Fire Danger' for that zone. In addition, before any decision is actually taken to disconnect supply in anticipation of possible problems, the circumstances and details will be considered by the Commission's senior management.

"All electricity supply regions in the State have been directed to carry out bushfire prevention measures with priority given to ensure retention of supply to essential services such as the Country Fire Authority, Forests Commission, State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, water and sewerage boards, Telecom, hospitals, food processors, etc. In preparation of the contingency plans, due consideration has been given to the need to maintain supply to these essential services to the maximum possible extent.

"Bushfire mitigation works in the Shire of Mornington have been virtually completed and the Commission sees little risk of supply being withdrawn as a fire prevention measure. This is not to say that supply will not be disconnected should a fire commence for whatever reason and there is a need to deactivate the Commission's lines for the safety of the fire fighting activities.

STATE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY BOARD

6002/62/60

2

It is also pointed out that supply is normally made available to pump installations under the Commission's Standard Conditions of Supply which means that there is no guarantee against interruption to supply at any time. The likelihood of interruption to supply for reasons of fire prevention is far less than that for other reasons.

"It would be impractical for the Commission to supply and connect portable generators for all essential services under emergency conditions. In those cases where maintenance of supply to an installation is critical, it is required that the consumer makes permanent provision for standby supply."

... ..
The Commission is very much aware of the need to maintain supply to essential services and I am confident that the Commission will only resort to the disconnection of supply when that course of action is deemed essential in the interests of the community.

Yours sincerely

(Sgd.) DAVID WHITE

David White
MINISTER FOR MINERALS AND ENERGY

Submitted to the Hon the Minister
for signature.

A. Swastor

SECRETARY

STATE RIVERS AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION

Branch or Office

MAIN URBAN SUPPLIES DIVISION

Date 22 December 1983

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

MANAGER, MAIN URBAN SUPPLIES

Corr. No.

Subject

(Indicate name of District or Project if applicable)

S.E.C. "BLACKOUT" ON EXTREME FIRE DANGER DAYS

09/29/2009

Advice received from General Manager - Supply, S.E.C., that the Minister of Minerals and Energy has agreed that as a "last resort" areas can be turned off where conditions due to weather, state of S.E.C. assets etc constitute a high risk of starting a fire on extreme fire danger days (Refer Appendix A. for copy of report by S.E.C. to Minister.)

Discussions with the General Manager - Supply, S.E.C. and consultation with regional managers in the four regional areas of the S.E.C. which may have to implement this option this summer has revealed a significant number of areas which might be involved. These areas are listed in Appendix B. for the four regions of the S.E.C., namely, Eastern Metropolitan, Gippsland, North Midlands and South Western Regions.

The approach taken to date is to gather the most up-to-date information available from the S.E.C. regions, in order that all water/sewerage authorities in possibly affected areas can be notified. This has been delayed due to the S.E.C. regions still currently assessing their position.

All operating areas of the Commission, Local Authorities Division, Diversions, are being forwarded this information with request that Districts, Construction activities and Local Water and Sewerage Authorities likely to be affected be advised of this "last resort" option by the S.E.C. Local diversions are difficult to identify and will have to be left to Diversions Section to consider any appropriate action.

It will be the responsibility of each operating District, Local Authority etc. to contact the S.E.C. region to precisely identify if any of assets which might be affected by this power disconnection option, to take the necessary standby action as deemed appropriate in each

The contacts in each S.E.C. region are listed in Appendix C. (For example there are some 10 Main Urban Supplies Division assets which may be affected by this proposal.)

[Handwritten signature]

It is strongly recommended that each District, Local Authority etc. arrange appropriate readily accessible contact with S.E.C. regional officers so that regular up-dating of the current status is always at hand.

The S.E.C. have advised the following regarding implementation of this option of turning off power supplies:

- (a) Prior to implementing the option as a whole all essential or emergency services the S.E.C. have identified as may be affected will be advised by regional officers.
- (b) Arrangements have been made between the C.F.A. and the S.E.C. that advice on pending extreme fire danger days will be received in the evening before the designated day for each region involved. Upon receipt of such advice the S.E.C. regional manager, with concurrence of the General Manager - Supply, will decide whether any areas should be disconnected.

Advice of any such disconnection to essential services etc. will be made available as soon as practical but unlikely to be until late evening prior to the designated day. Disconnection could be from 6 to 36 hours in duration.

- (c) In addition, S.E.C. assets of known concern will be patrolled by S.E.C. officers and if all conditions (mainly hot weather and high winds) are met, which place S.E.C. assets as a high risk to starting a fire; requests will be made for disconnection of power from this asset. Under these circumstances little warning will be available to essential services but the S.E.C. advises that duration of cut-off in these instances is likely to only be a few hours (generally while wind conditions are of concern).

The General Manager - Supply, S.E.C., has stressed that turning off power supplies is a last resort option only, but it must be recognised as a real possibility in areas of concern. It was stressed that essential service authorities should identify their assets of concern in order that continuing work maintenance programmes by the S.E.C. may be able to be adjusted to ensure such essential service assets would not be affected by the power-off option.

Contacts within the Commission are as follows:

6009/29/2009

09/29/2009

Mr R. Nicolson	or	(Main Urban Supplies)
Mr J. Cummins		" " "
Mr K. Wood		(Local Authorities)
Mr D. Baker		(Diversions)
Mr C. Riley		(Rural Water Supplies)
Mr R. Dickson		(Construction etc.)

S.E.C. Regions - Local Commission Contacts

Eastern Metropolitan	Mr R. Tanner	(Frankston)
	Mr P. Eaton	"
Gippsland	Mr G. Kermode	(Maffra)
North Midlands	Mr K. Briggs	(Bendigo)
	Mr G. Michell	"
South Western	Mr R. McLean	(Camperdown)


G.E. SWALES
Manager, Main Urban Supplies

- Dist:
 MNU
 A/Sec.
 DET
 DRW (Mr C. Riley)
 Diversions
 A/DIA (Mr Wood)
 CNB
 DE, Frankston
 DE, Maffra
 DE, Bendigo
 DE, Camperdown

rjw/aeg
ext 3902

20 December 1983

NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR MINERALS AND ENERGY

Copy to: CGM, DCGM, GMS, CED

BUSHFIRE PREVENTION MEASURES : DISCONNECTION OF SUPPLY

As part of our overall strategy plan for bushfire prevention, Regional Managers were asked to prepare operational contingency plans for the possible disconnection of areas where the massive SEC works on fire prevention may be incomplete at the onset of the extreme fire danger period. They were requested to take into account the social impact of such actions and, in particular, the necessity to maintain supply to essential services such as water supply, communications, hospitals, food preservation, etc.

Because disconnection of supply is an anathema to an organisation specifically set up to provide supply, the above directive served to motivate action to complete bushfire prevention works and to prompt effective planning of such works to retain essential service supplies.

Disconnection of supply would be a last resort action only.

Our intended approach is as follows:

- 1 Regions have identified those lines, spurs or local areas where work is incomplete and are progressively eliminating these as work continues.
- 2 Discussions are being held with regional representatives of State Rivers to ensure that essential pumping requirements are recognised and to identify any local Water Boards which need to be contacted.
- 3 Arrangements were made with the CFA in 1977 for notification to our Regions of "extreme fire danger days" (these go beyond the total fire ban stage). This arrangement is currently being verified with the CFA.

On such days we would ask for additional surveillance by CFA in designated areas and intend to establish additional operational patrols of our own for these areas on particular lines which are identified to have some outstanding works. These SEC patrols would be equipped with small water tanks and would be in contact with our operational centres. In extreme cases as the combination of conditions, including high winds, give rise to a high potential for fire initiation from our assets, these patrols could request disconnection of part or all of particular feeders.

6002/62/2009
09/29/2009

There is another aspect of our activities which may give rise to some concern and this relates to private service lines.

Our check inspections are identifying a significant number of defective installations. Many defect notices have been issued and customers are having defects fixed. However, the total volume of work is more than can be handled by local electrical contractors and many installations will not be able to be attended to before the worst of the fire season.

We have issued instructions which would effectively provide for the temporary propping or staying of private poles to increase the rate of correction of defects and are endeavouring to interest other contractors who could help in this regard.

Nevertheless, if we are to effectively carry out our task of bushfire prevention it will be necessary to disconnect a significant number of customers with defective private lines at the height of the fire season. Also, our fire prevention works have of course taken first priority and as a result some new customers requiring supply prior to Christmas will not be able to be accommodated.



CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER

09/29/2009

STATE RIVERS AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

Branch or Office CAMPERDOWN

To MANAGER, MAIN URBAN SUPPLIES (ATTENTION MR. D. WATSON) Date 21ST DECEMBER, 1983

From ACTING DISTRICT ENGINEER, CAMPERDOWN Corr. No.

Subject RE: POSSIBLE INTERRUPTIONS TO ELECTRICITY SUPPLY ON EXTREME FIRE DANGER DAYS

6007/29/2009

1. Attached are a tabulation and locality plan detailing the "spur" lines which are presently being assessed by the South Western Region of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria with regard to hazard potential on extreme fire danger days.
2. The S.E.C.V. representatives stressed that this list of lines represents only a list of those lines presently being assessed with regard to hazard potential. Under no circumstances does this advice imply that the S.E.C.V. considers any of these lines to be unsafe or hazardous under any climatic conditions.
3. The S.E.C.V. assessment of these lines will be completed early in 1984 and a short list of lines which it considers should be shut down under extreme climatic conditions finalised by mid January.
4. Arrangements have been made for the S.E.C.V. to advise the Commission's Camperdown District Centre as soon as any of the lines included on the attached list are given the "all clear". Head Office will subsequently be advised by this Centre.
5. In general, work proposed on those lines tabulated, but not listed for completion A.S.A.P., is major and is therefore not expected to be completed before the end of the 1983/84 summer.
6. The S.E.C.V. will be formally advising all consumers supplied off lines included on the mid January short list of the possibility of having supply shut off during periods of extreme weather conditions.
7. The S.E.C.V. intend to continuously monitor climatic conditions throughout the summer. It is not intended to have a blanket shut down of all lines included on the short list on Total Fire Ban days. Climatic conditions will be constantly monitored in conjunction with the Country Fire Authority and only the minimum number of lines will be shut down for the minimum of time. It is therefore considered very unlikely that any one line will be shut down for greater than 24 hours at a time.

8. The S.E.C.V. officers expressed concern that their consumers may be informed of possible shut downs of supply incorrectly by the Commission as a result of these enquiries and stressed that official advice can only come from the S.E.C.V. after their current assessment has been completed.
9. No S.R.& W.S.C. works in the Otway District will be affected.
10. It appears that the only Local Authorities which may be affected would be those servicing Peterborough, Geelong, Moriac and Caramut.



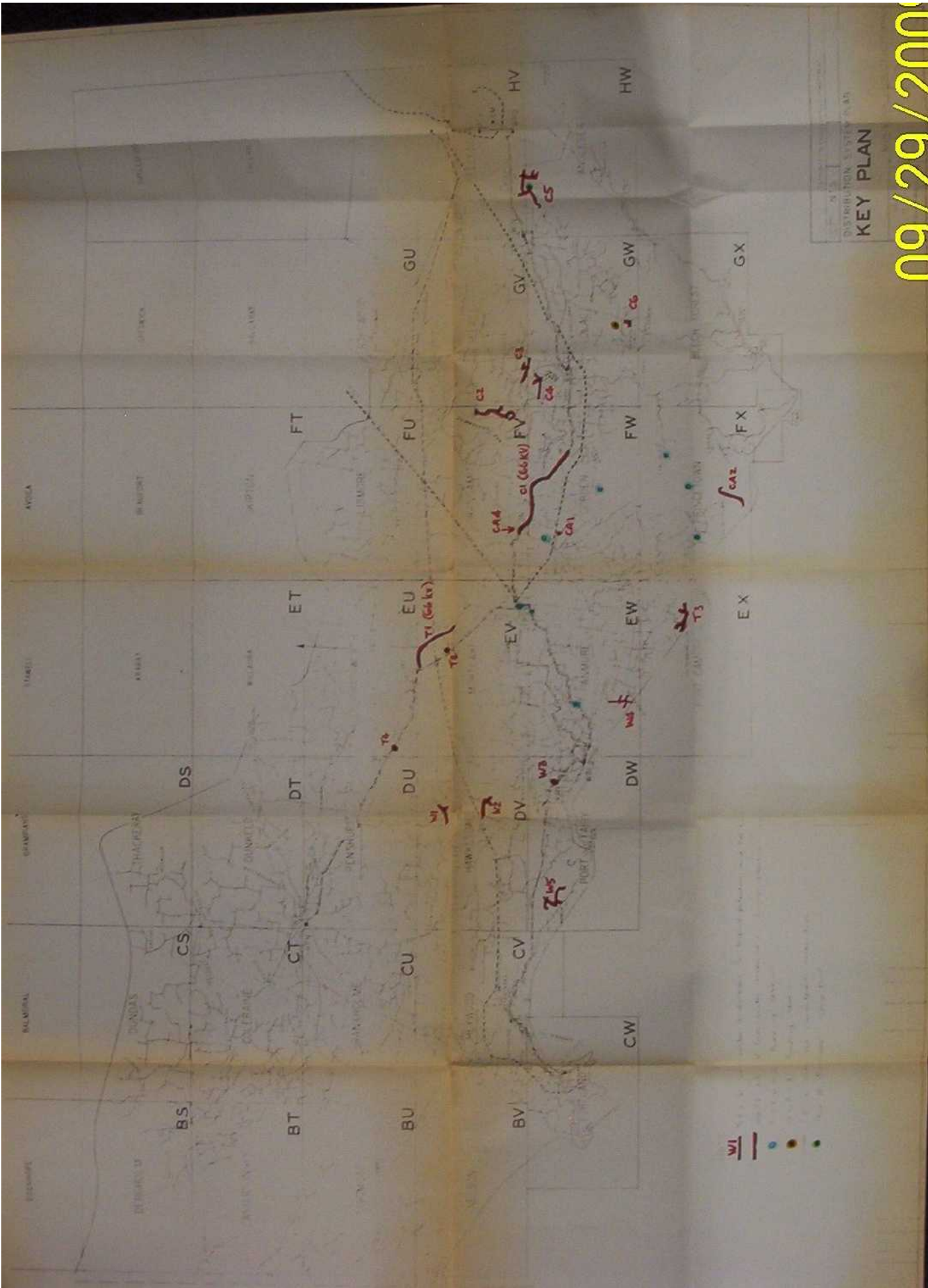
R. C. McLean
Acting District Engineer

09/29/2009

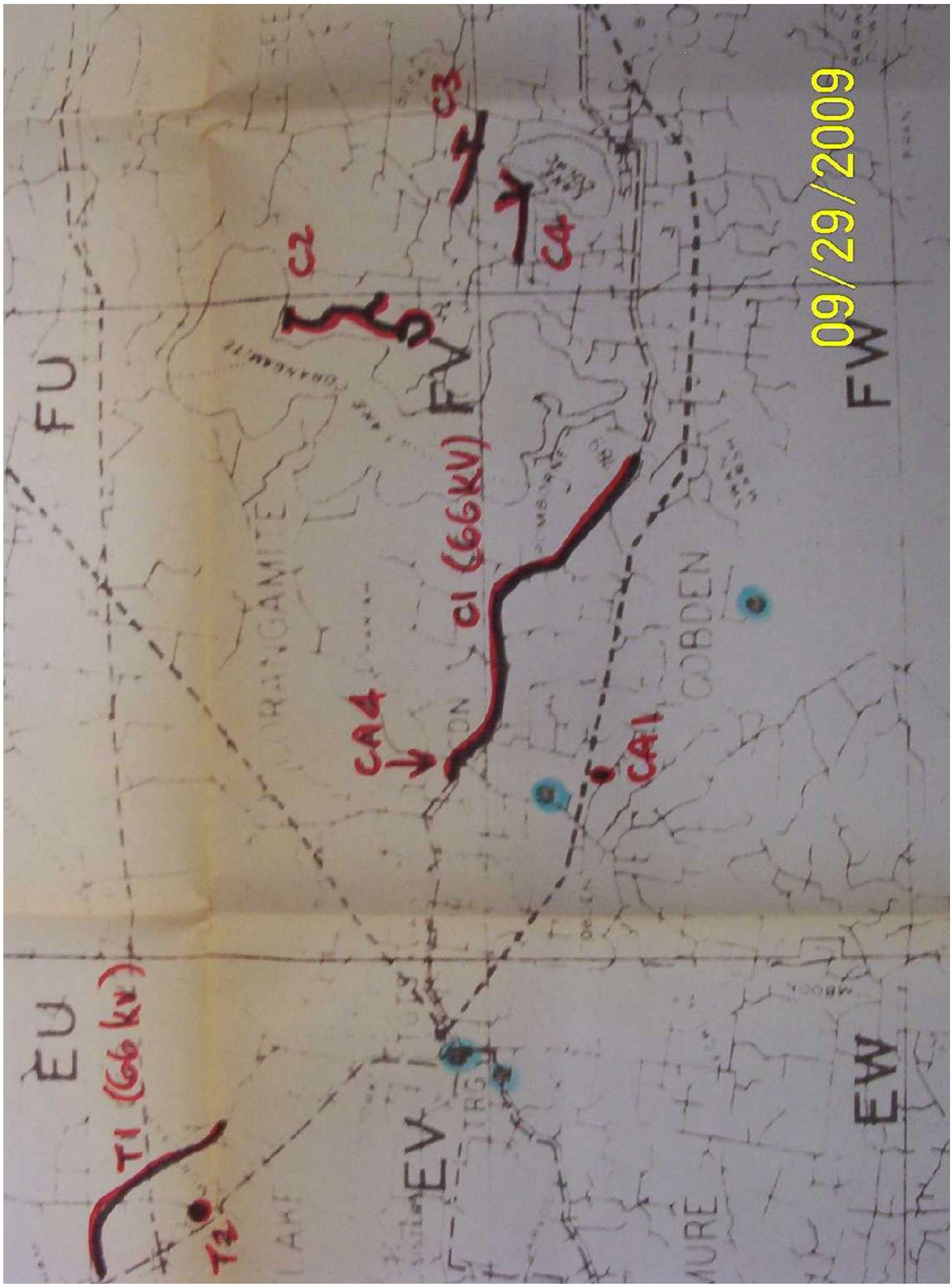
LIST OF E.E.C.V. LINES UNDER ASSESSMENT FOR
HAZARD POTENTIAL. - 21ST DECEMBER, 1982

09/29/2009

No.	LOCATION	REMARKS
	5th Newsteadale - Koorlingal line	Rural area.
	5th Newsteadale - Woodburn line.	Rural area.
	Tangery via Korolt - Conn's Lane line	Rural area. (Bore in this area)
	Mepunga - Allans Flat Road line.	Rural area.
	Yambuk - Glenore line.	Rural area.
	Wortlake township - Mill Street only.	Local Authority pump station not affected.
	Peterborough township.	Whole town would be affected.
	Caramut township.	Unspecified part of town only. Intend to correct problem A.S.A.P. (i.e. early January, 1983)
1	South Camperdown - Judd line.	Rural area. Will be fixed on 28/12/1983.
2	Lower Gellibrand - Rosendale line.	Rural area.
6	Camperdown - Highway west of butter factory.	Six (6) consumers only affected.
	Corangamite - Corangamite line.	Rural area.
	5th Lake Colac - Oudit Road line.	Rural area. (Bore in this area)
	5th Colac - Balintore line.	Rural area. May be some bore irrigators affected.
	Moriac East - Mosewarre line.	Will affect supply point to Shire of Barabool. Shire's use not known. Moriac township may be affected.
	Barwon Downs	One (1) day required to fix. Will be done A.S.A.P. under standard "interruption to supply notice". This will affect G.W. & S.T. pumps and Barwon Downs township.
C.	15th Medlake & East Camperdown	66kV sub-transmission lines, shut down of which will not affect consumers.



09/29/2000



09/29/2009

09/29/2009

APPENDIX B.

NORTH MIDLANDS REGION

(Possible Areas for S.E.C. Power to be Interrupted on Days of High Fire Risk)

1. Coliban System - Works Affected

- Crusoe Reservoir - Chlorinator
- No. 7 Reservoir - "
- Lake Eppalock - Electric pumps not operating
- Harcourt Chlorinator
- Taradale Pumps + Chlorinator
- Strathfieldsaye Pumps + Chlorinator.

2. Townships and Areas Affected

Huntly, Epsom, Marong, Maiden Gully, Junortoun, Strathfieldsaye, Lockwood, Big Hill, Ravenswood, Harcourt, Barkers Creek, Maldon, Fryerstown, Taradale.

3. Waterworks Trusts (Partly/Totally Affected)

Elmore, Goornong, Colbinabbin, Woodend, Trentham, Malmsbury, Macedon, Lancefield, Pyalong, Bealiba, Avoca, St. Arnaud, Rochester.

4. Small Towns/Localities that may be Affected (Partly or Wholly)

Bullengarook, Tylden, Blackwood, Barrys Reef, Newbury, Little Hampton, Baynton, Sidom, Pipers Creek, High Park, Heskett, Cherokee, Darraweit Gum, Redesdale, Talbot, Dunnolly, Tarnagulla, Lanecoorie, Volcano Reservoir, Piangil, Nyah, Natya, Ultima, Murrabit, Myall, Macorna, Torrumberry Gunbower, Nth Lockington, Dingee, Prairie, Mitiamo, East Loddon, Kamarooka, Calivil, Yarrowalla Sth, Piavella Corop, Strathallan, Lockington, Bomawm, Ballendella, Narneella.

407-421x B
UPPSLAND AREA - POSSIBLE AREAS FOR S.E.C. POWER TO BE INTERRUPTED
ON DAYS OF HIGH FIRE RISK

NEWRY - GLENMAGGIE - SEATON (N.W. MAFFRA)
BRIAGOLONG - MARATHON SPUR
WOMBAT SPUR NEAR AVON RIVER (BOISDALE)

TRARALGON - GORMANDALE

BOOLARRA

NOOJEE

ERICA

MOONDARRA

LEONGATHA

YANAKIE

MEERLIEU (STRATFORD/BAIRNSDALE AREA)

LAKES ENTRANCE

METUNG

COLQUHOUN

BEMM RIVER

MALLACOOTA

The above localities were obtained by Mr Kenneth D.E. Maffra from the Bulmeyer SEC Distribution Office at their Traralgon regional office. No plan of the localities is available. The SEC advice to Mr Kenneth was that any power interruption would be of short duration (i.e. a matter of hours only), & as far as possible would not include urban communities. SEC did not see the need to maintain power at all times for other uses such as irrigation pumping.

Mr Kenneth will maintain liaison with the Traralgon office of the SEC.

Copies:
MMU (Mr Whitton)
DKS

6007/29/2009