Electric Line Clearance Management Plan

2022 - 2023

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Appendix 2	ELCMP.002	Audit Program
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Appendix 5	ELCMP.005	Plant and Equipment Audit - EWP
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Appendix 9	ELCMP.009	Inspection Quality Audit
Appendix 10	ELCMP.010	Cutting Quality Audit
Appendix 11	ELCMP.011	Procedure/Work Instruction Audit
Appendix 12	ELCMP.012	Environmental Audit
Appendix 13	ELCMP.013	Code Compliance Audit
Appendix 14	ELCMP.014	Corrective Action Report
Appendix 15	ELCMP.015	Daily Plant Safety Checklist
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Appendix 17	ELCMP.017	Inspection Work Instruction Sheet
Appendix 18	ELCMP.018	Daily Work Sheet
Appendix 19	ELCMP.019	Dispute Resolution Process
Appendix 21	ELCMP.021	Areas of Aboriginal Cultural Sensitivity
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Appendix 26	ELCMP.026	Exception Risk Assessment Form
Appendix 28	ELCMP.028	Newspaper Notice

APPENDICES

Note: Appendices contain key records (forms and documents) that are generated by the plan. Some Appendices may not contain documents or completed records at time of issue as they may be dependent on work being done during the program. These records will be updated and placed in the Appendices as they are generated for the program and will be available as applicable to the time of any compliance audits.

Management Plan Particulars

Document number:	ELCMP
Issue Number:	7.0
Authorised by:	Anne Howard Chief Executive Officer
Authorisation date:	31 March 2022

Revision List / Document Control

The following Revision List records the issues and revisions of the document. For convenience, the nature of the revision is briefly noted. Revisions to the Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (ELCMP) are made as required to reflect changes upon which this plan is based.

Revisions are made by replacement of single pages, sections or re-issue of the complete ELCMP as required.

Section	Issue	Revision Details	Date
ELCMP	V6	Based on previous plan Version 6 contains updates reflecting the new Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020	Mar 21
Appendices	Several	Based on previous Appendices but updated to reflect the new Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020	Mar 21
ELCMP	V7	Updates better reflect paragraph references in Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 and expanded section to clarify requirements	Mar 22
Appendices	All	Updated all Appendices to V7 and better reflect the changes to paragraph references	Mar 22

Preparation of Management Plan

The following sections are as per Regulation 9 of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

2. Before 31 March in each year, a responsible person must ensure that a management plan relating to compliance with the Code for the next financial year is prepared

The scope of works for this ELCMP is to inspect, manage and maintain clearance of vegetation from Powercor's Electricity Network, including notification, consultation and negotiation with affected persons in accordance with the Electricity Safety Act 1998 and Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 (The Regulations) while maintaining the Council's tree assets.

The responsible person named in (4b) will ensure that Council's ELCMP is prepared before 31 March each year and submitted to ESV within 14 days of request. Refer to **ECLMP-001** (***Appendix 1***) for *ELCMP Review Process* to ensure the ELCMP is amended & internally authorised before 31 March each year.

3. Sub Regulation 3 Refers to Major Electricity Companies requirements and does not apply to this plan.

4a. Name, address and telephone number of the responsible person

Name of Council:	Surf Coast Shire Council
Address:	1 Merrijig Way, Torquay, VIC 3228
Chief Executive Officer:	Robyn Seymour
Telephone:	03 5261 0600
e-mail:	info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

4b. Name, position, address and telephone number of the individual who was responsible for the preparation of the management plan

Name:	Jason Eales
Position (Unit Manager):	Open Space Operations Coordinator
Address:	1 Merrijig Way, Torquay, VIC 3228
Telephone:	03 5261 0600
e-mail:	info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

4c. Name, position, address and telephone number of the persons who are responsible for carrying out the management plan

Name:	Paul Dimitrijevski
Position (Unit Director):	Arboricultural Supervisor/Inspector
Address:	1 Merrijig Way, Torquay, VIC 3228
Telephone:	03 5261 0600
e-mail:	info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

Name:	Angus Cullenward
Position (Unit Director):	Vegetation Maintenance Team Leader
Address:	1 Merrijig Way, Torquay, VIC 3228
Telephone:	03 5261 0600
e-mail:	info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

4d. The telephone number of a person who can be contacted in an emergency that requires clearance of a tree from an electric line that the responsible person is required to keep clear of trees

Telephone:	03 5261 0600
Name:	A/H Emergency Response Staff Member (Varies week to week)

For the purposes of dispute resolution, the following Responsible Person may be connected in conformance with the requirements set out in this section.

Name:	Travis Nelson
Position:	Manager Operations
Address:	1 Merrijig Way, Torquay, VIC 3228
Telephone:	03 5261 0600
e-mail:	info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

4e. Objectives of the plan

The following are identified as the key objectives of this plan to fulfil Council's commitment to maintain the space between the vegetation and powerlines (clearance space) under its responsibility and fulfil its duties as set out in the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

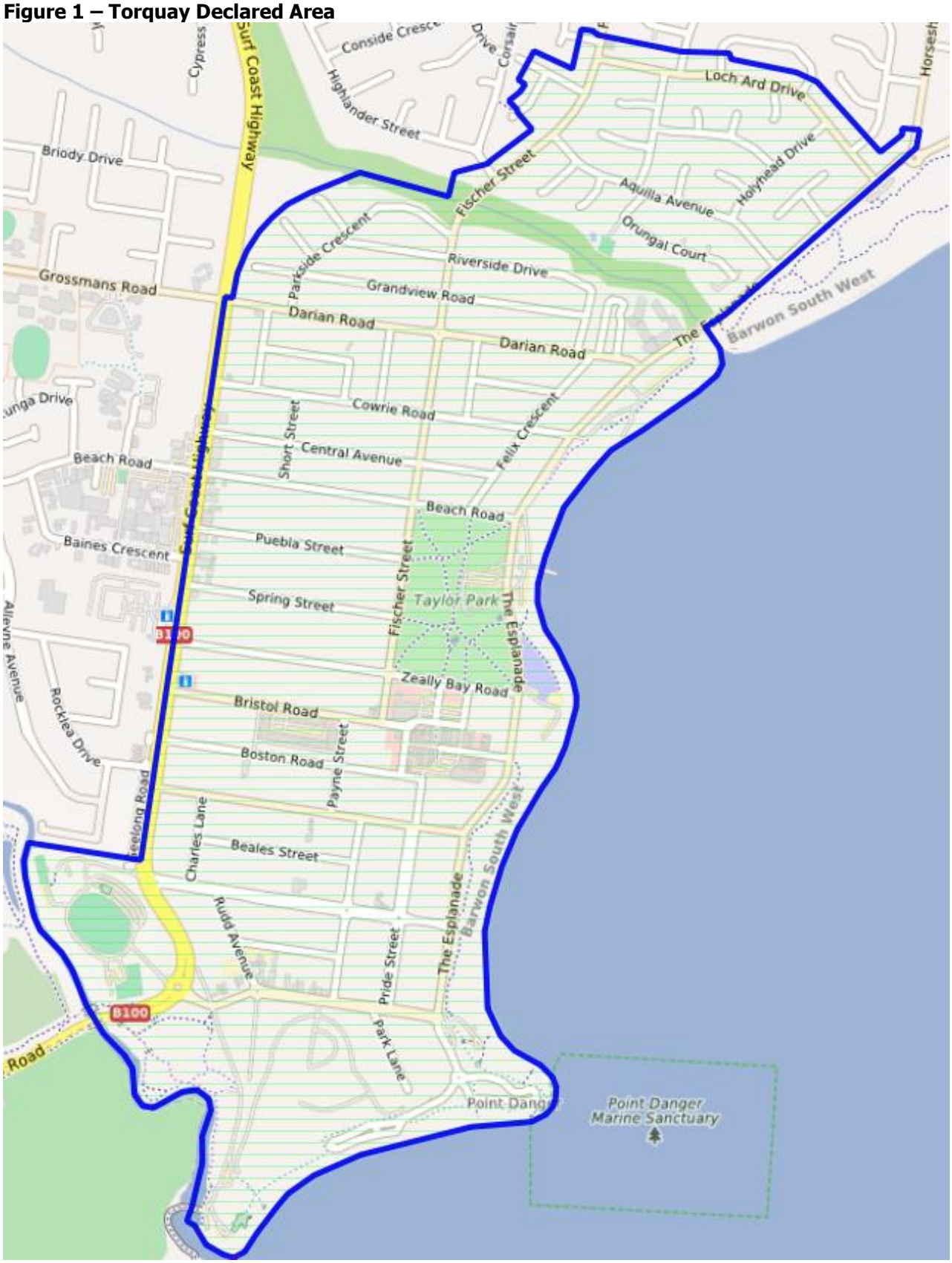
- Compliance with the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 and Code of Practice;
- Electrical safety;
- Minimise fire starts as a result of contact between vegetation and electricity network;
- Continuity of electricity supply to Council Residents;
- Public Safety;
- Provision of a safe workplace for employees and service providers;
- Vegetation management systems to maximise environment and amenity value of the Council's trees;
- Ensure areas of important vegetation which may be deemed as such, based on those areas containing botanically, historically or culturally important vegetation or vegetation of outstanding aesthetic or ecological significance, and/or the habitat or rare or endangered species; and
- Community satisfaction with the manner the works required are carried out.

Council has developed a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor the overall vegetation management performance. Relevant processes will be monitored and audited by the responsible person to ensure that the objectives of the plan are being implemented and actioned. This will be done utilising the *Objectives & KPIs Audit* **ELCMP-003** (***Appendix 3***).

4f. The land to which the management plan applies by the inclusion of a map

Declared Area Boundary
Council's declared areas are gazetted by State government as prescribed in the State Electricity Act 1998 and are based within the Torquay township as they were in 1986. For operational purposes, Council has replicated these maps which are based on the formal ESV database maps (https://eservices.esv.vic.gov.au/LineClearance/). Councils Declared Area is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Torquay Declared Area



Low Bushfire Risk Areas (LBRA)

4g. Review any hazardous bushfire risk areas and low bushfire risk areas in the land referred to in paragraph (f) (as indicated on the map)

Hazardous Bushfire Risk Areas (HBRA) and Low Bushfire Risk Areas (LBRA)
Note: there is no Hazardous Bushfire Risk Areas (HBRA) within the Declared Area

The CFA review and assign High and Low Bushfire Risk as prescribed by Section 80 of the Electricity Safety Act 1998. Part of that process includes liaison with Council and notification following inclusion in the Government Gazette. These maps are used to create subsequent maps outlining the Hazardous Bushfire Risk Areas within the Declared area which is stored in Councils GIS system should there be any area designated as High Bushfire Risk Area. At present there is no High Bushfire Risk Area. Council will check with the CFA annually and make amendments as required to ensure the maps we use are current. The most recent check of the CFA changes across the state have not changed the status of the LBRA / HBRA in our Declared Area.

4h. The location of each area that the responsible person knows contains a tree that the responsible person may need to cut or remove to ensure compliance with the Code and that is indigenous, listed in a planning scheme or a tree of ecological, historical, aesthetic, cultural or environmental significance:

For trees defined within the following three categories; as far as practicable, Council will not cut a tree more than is necessary to comply with the Regulations. We will not remove any of these trees unless it is required to ensure compliance or make an unsafe situation safe. We may remove one of these trees if a suitably qualified Arborist has assessed the tree and advise trimming the tree would make the tree unhealthy or unviable. These conditions apply to all known trees that are identified here and any further trees that may be found to meet the criteria during the period of this plan.

All personnel are inducted into the Electric Line Clearance Management Plan as per ***Appendix 16***, Induction Checklist, and personnel are provided the following information and associated Appendices.

i. Indigenous to Victoria:

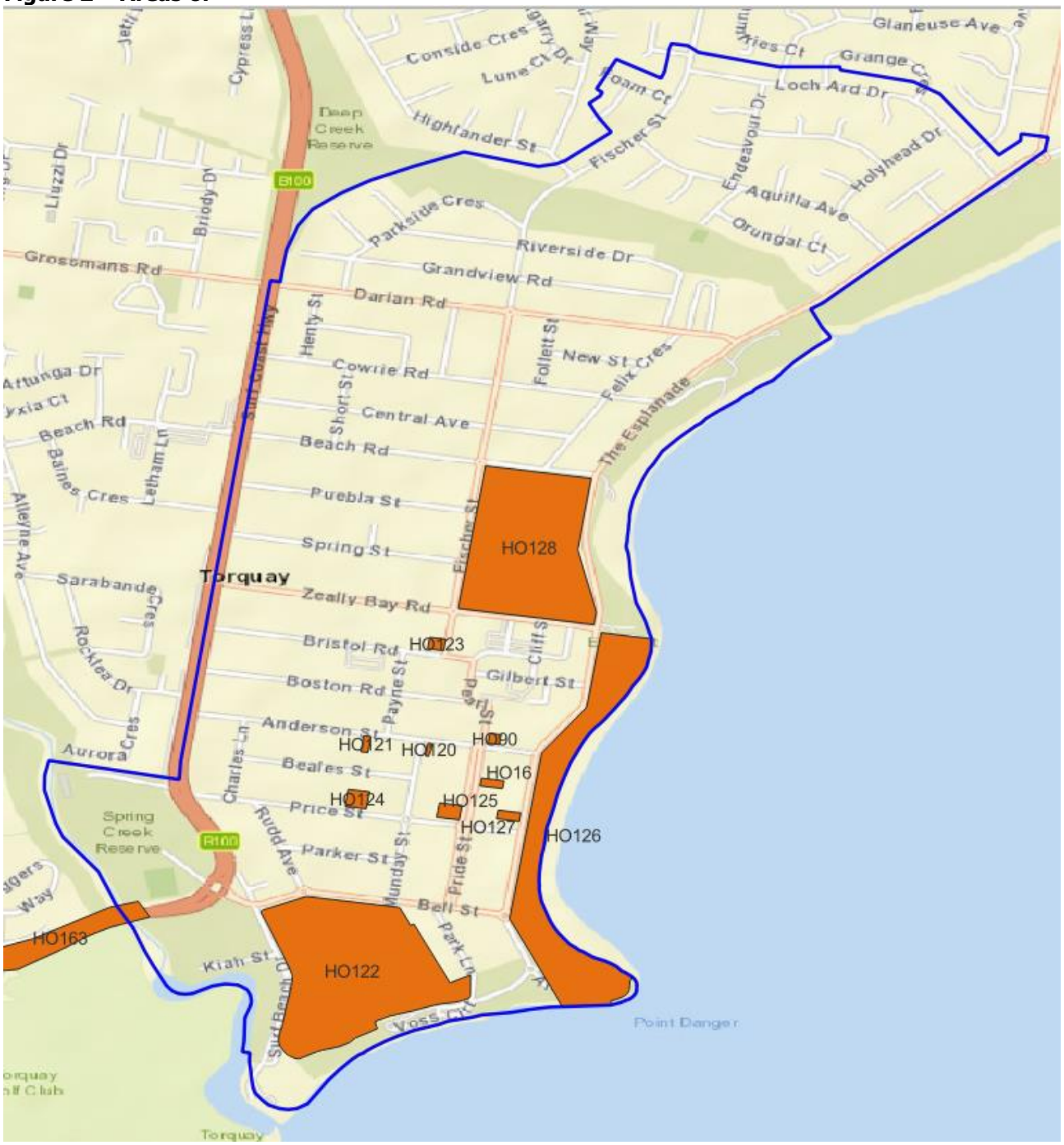
Our list of Plants that are indigenous to the Surf Coast Council are maintained at https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/Environment/Natural-environment/Local-plants-and-weeds.
This register is referred to for the most current list.

Council has a tree inventory of the trees we clear for Powerline clearance. This data includes the species of the trees, to ensure we are aware of which trees need to be managed under this section of its management plan.

ii. Listed in a planning scheme to be of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance:

Surf Coast Shire currently have several areas of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance within their declared area that have trees within the vicinity of Powerlines. These sites are registered in the Surf Coast Planning scheme under the zones listed in Figure 2, shown in Orange, which refer to controls applying to trees over 3m in height.

Figure 2 – Areas of



iii. A tree of cultural or environmental significance:

Council has reviewed the Areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity and the maps of these areas can be found in ***Appendix 21***. Council has no known trees of cultural or environmental significance registered within the vicinity of Powerlines.

These locations will be discussed at inductions and any special requirements will be outworked. There may be further trees identified as potentially meeting the above criteria. These trees will be assessed by a qualified arborist and if assessed as meeting the above criteria they will be added to our list and managed in line with the above process.

4i. The means which the responsible person is required to use to identify a tree specified in paragraph (h)

Section (g) of this Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Maps will be checked and updated if required. Council does not require a planning permit for electric line clearance works within the declared area within the ESO or SLO. Our Inspection resources will be provided with the relevant maps ***(Appendix 21)*** and advised to minimise the impact on Indigenous vegetation. Old mature indigenous tree may be identified during inspection and in the event a significant tree is identified, no pruning shall occur without further consultation with Council. Council records Indigenous trees on its SSA Mapping system.

Contractors contact Council if there are any site indicators that a tree may have significance if they haven't already been alerted to it by Council. Before any works are undertaken on old mature indigenous plants, trees are inspected. In the event a significant tree is identified, no pruning shall occur without further consultation with Council.

Trees are identified by a qualified arborist with knowledge of indigenous, native and exotic trees. Council staff also refer to maps detailed in section (h) and the relevant planning overlays and GIS to ensure that minimal impact is made in areas of cultural, historical, botanical, ecological or habitat significance for rare or endangered species.

Trees are identified and managed to the Regulations and also in line with the Surf Coast Shire's Urban Tree and Vegetation Policy.

The responsible person will consult the following resources at least annually to ensure the accuracy of Council's knowledge on the location of such trees:

- Ongoing review and identification of Council trees by Parks staff;
- Council planning scheme overlay for historical, cultural, environmental or aesthetic significance; Register of significant trees; https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/schemes-and-amendments/browse-planning-scheme/maps?f.Scheme%7CplanningSchemeName=Surf+Coast.
- Heritage Register (http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/) within the meaning of the **Heritage Act 2017**;
- Council will be notified by Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council of any changes to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register. The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register is not a publicly accessible register because it contains culturally sensitive information. Applicants may apply online for access or advice using the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System (ACHRIS - https://achris.vic.gov.au/#/dashboard) established under section 144 of the **Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006**;
- Threatened Flora and Fauna List in accordance with section 10 of the **Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988** (https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/conserving-threatened-species/threatened-list);
- Threatened Invertebrate Fauna List https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/50452/Advisory_List_of_Threatened_Invertebrate_Fauna_2009_FINAL_Sept_2009.pdf); and
- Threatened Vertebrate Fauna List www.environment.vic.gov.au).

4j The management procedures that the responsible person is required to adopt to ensure compliance with the Code, which must include/specify details of the methods to be adopted for:

i. Managing trees and maintaining a minimum clearance space as required by the Code

There are over 250 street trees in the declared area that may be affected by powerlines. Council currently has a list of over 150 of these trees that have powerlines above or nearby which may require clearance pruning. The trees identified as requiring to be cleared are audited to determine if Council should modify the amount it allows for growth rates as well as other improvement opportunities.

Inspection/pruning programs and schedules

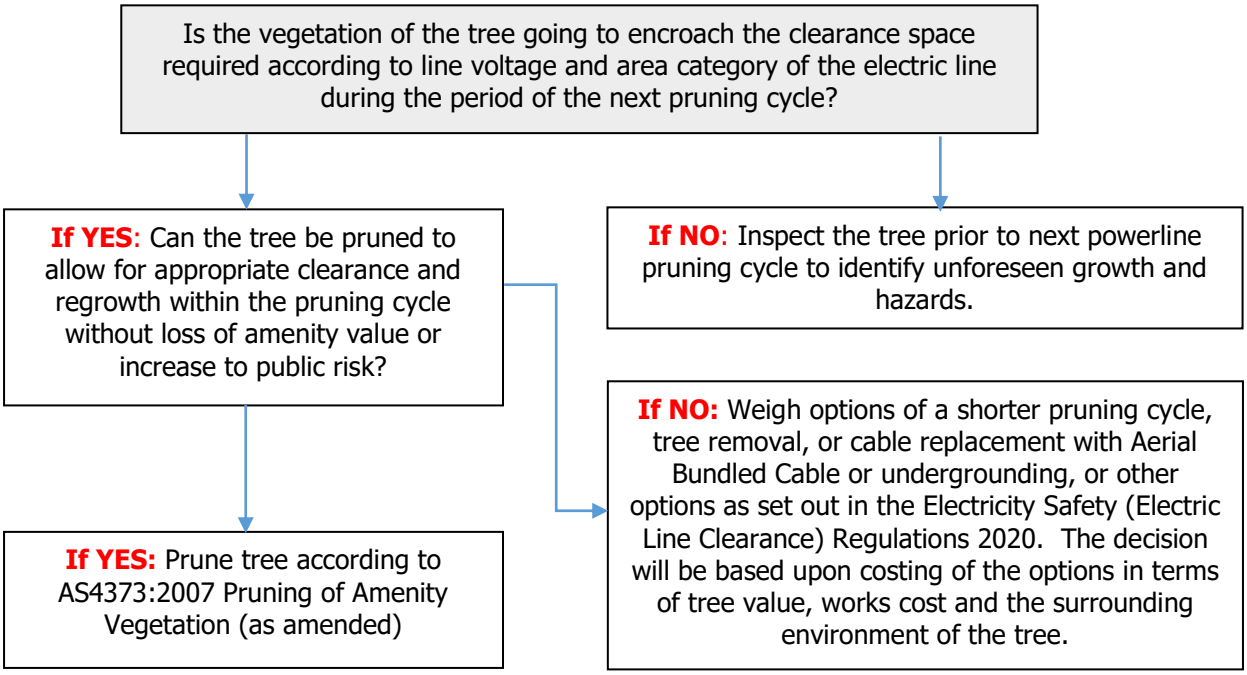
Council has determined that the electric line clearance inspection and pruning will be undertaken annually for maintaining the statutory clearance space between vegetation and powerlines. This cyclic frequency provides the greatest opportunity to maximise the amenity value of its street trees. A qualified and trained contractor has been appointed to undertake annual inspections and provide a report of findings to Councils Responsible Person. Works of any pruning requirements are to ensure the street trees remain clear of electrical lines. Each inspection shall be fully documented and each street visited shall be identified.

Council will base its program around the timelines in Works Schedule provided in ***Appendix 23***.

Progress to plan will be monitored and managed through the Councils Monthly Operations meeting. Any deficiencies will be reviewed and if required resources will be increased to meet the schedule.

Council inspects and clears its Declared areas as one Zone with no Hazardous bush fire risk areas (HBRA). The Low Bushfire Risk (LBRA) works are carried out as per ***Appendix 23*** **-** Works Schedule. The Cutting Crew is required to prune the street trees so that the clearance space is in accordance with the Regulations. The Cutting Crew will report to Council the extent of regrowth observed from each species. The Council will utilise this information to evaluate the growth rates and size of all trees near powerlines and then take appropriate action to remove fast growing and tall trees and replace with appropriate species or replace powerlines with engineering solutions. ***Appendix 23*** shall be signed off at completion of the Cutting program to verify the program is complete.

The following outlines the decision-making process with regard to maintaining line clearance.



During the inspection, trees which are in breach of the Code will be identified. In addition, any trees which are determined to be likely to breach the Minimum Clearance Space in the next twelve months are also to be identified.

In making these evaluations and before deciding on the most appropriate method, due consideration is given to the site's specifics, including:

- the significance of the site as a natural habitat of endangered species of both flora and fauna;
- relocation of the powerline from the vegetation evaluating the savings achieved by avoiding the recurrent costs of cutting and assessing the benefits of implementing available and practicable alternative construction methods;
- the significance and public value of the site's aesthetics;
- the impact on the tree's amenity and utility value if subjected to pruning versus removal;
- the sites suitability to accept more appropriate species as replacements;
- the environmental impact of proposed works;
- determining the most appropriate method of actioning the offending vegetation concerned;
- appropriate planning and scheduling;
- identification and quantification of equipment and accredited personnel required;
- any hazards outside the clearance and regrowth spaces that may require assessment or correction;
- funding;
- community and customer consultation; and
- compiling a data base in conjunction with the Distribution Company that can be used in future years in determining costs associated with different clearance techniques.

Each inspection shall be fully documented and each street visited shall be identified utilising Electronic data collection or the *Inspection Work Instruction Sheet* **ELCMP-017** (***Appendix 17***).

All pruning works will be undertaken in accordance the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020, AS4373:2007 Pruning of Amenity Trees and best practice methods. The cutting crew will document the work carried out by completing the *Daily Work Sheet* (***Appendix 18***).

Where an inspector deems it likely that cutting is not likely to meet the requirements of AS4373 this will be indicated on the *Inspection Work Instruction Sheet* and will consult with the Unit Manager to seek approval on the pruning method to be undertaken. The Unit Manager will make the final decision on the method of pruning and formal sign off/remarks is to be added to the *Daily Work Sheet* **ELCMP-018** (***Appendix 18***) that advice and approval has been sought from the Unit Manager.

Detailed assessment of the specific pruning requirements of each tree will be assessed and recorded during the initial inspection prior to line clearance works being undertaken. Councils work crew or contractor will be directed to prune each tree in accordance with the Work Instructions issued by Council and the cutting crew will document the work carried out by completing the *Daily Work Sheet* **ELCMP-018** (***Appendix 18***). The clearance space provided beyond the minimum recommended clearance space detailed within the Code would be forecasted in accordance with species type, local conditions and pruning frequency.

Emergency Cutting and Pruning

Council will undertake emergency cutting and pruning activities in the following situations:

- where a tree is identified as encroaching the clearance space due to unanticipated growth;
- as a result of a tree falling or becoming damaged so that it requires cutting or removal to maintain the required clearance space; or
- where a tree has been assessed by a suitably qualified arborist and confirmed to have an imminent likelihood of contacting the electric lines having regard to foreseeable local conditions.

As part of such works Council will record where and when the cutting or removal was undertaken, identify why the cutting/removal was required and record when the last inspection of the tree occurred. All records will be filed at the Council office in the ELCMP operations folder. The operational folder will be archived as per Council's archiving process after the completion of the program including audits and before the commencement of the following program.

Council will undertake its urgent works in accordance with the Regulations and not remove or cut any more than one meter from the minimum clearance space around the electric line. Ongoing monitoring by visual assessment of the regrowth rates of Council's trees growing under powerlines will be undertaken to ensure continued compliance.

Notified Work Required and Conducted

Locations notified by the Distribution Company or any other stakeholder as requiring attention to maintain powerline clearance which are responsibility of the Municipality will be assessed by the Responsible Person as soon as practical following receipt of the notice.

When applicable, the Responsible Person will convey to the Cutting Crews, the site of any prunings notified by the Distribution Company as being the result of emergency clearing. The work of removing the pruning debris will be programmed by the Cutting Crew. Council will notify the Distribution Company or other stakeholder upon completion of the clearing. Records of these reports and clearing shall be maintained as per Councils Archive procedure.

Habitat for Threatened Fauna

Council's declared areas are comprised predominantly of urban streets with vegetation which has been planted. Council currently doesn't have habitat trees within its declared areas that require electrical line clearance maintenance.

If it is found that a tree contains occupied habitat the following process will be implemented to manage the tree/s;

- As soon as a tree is identified as the habitat of a possibly threatened species, the operator must stop work and inform their supervisor, or Council, and seek clarification of the threatened species and the breeding season of that species. Council or the contractor will refer to the sites listed from whin the links in 4i.
- Works will be scheduled outside of breeding season where practicable.
- Translocation of the fauna if not practical to undertake outside of the breeding season.
- Cutting only to occur when not practicable to cut or remove outside the breeding season.

Cutting or removal of habitat for threatened fauna is only to occur to achieve Code compliance or to make an unsafe situation safe.

Council's has various policies and strategies contained on their website (https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/Environment/Natural-environment/Local-plants-and-weeds). Within this strategy is Councils removal/replacement advice for unsuitable species.

Cutting or removal of habitat for threatened fauna is only to occur to achieve Code compliance or to make an unsafe situation safe.

Managing and Recording Regrowth

Council will observe and record the rate of growth of species under the growing conditions, which prevail in the Municipality and apply these observations when determining the extent and frequency of pruning. The inspector will record the estimated growth rate from the previous year on the *Inspection Work Instruction Sheet* **ELCMP-017** (***Appendix 17***).

The following growth rates have been assumed by Council.

Species	Annual Estimated Growth Rate Side	Annual Estimated Growth Rate Under
Eucalypts	.2m	.8m
Cypress	.2m	.5m
Other Exotics	.2m	.6m

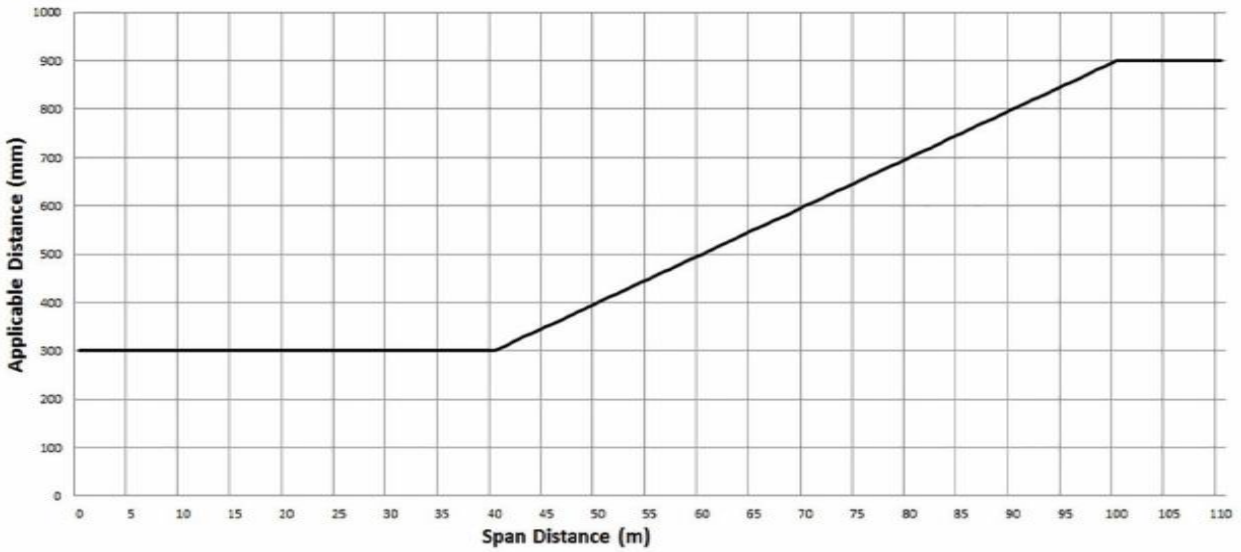
Managing the Clearance Space

The minimum clearance space required is detailed under Schedule 1 of the *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 – Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance* and summarised in the following tables.

TABLE 1 - MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES SURROUNDING A POWERLINE—ALL AREAS
Insulated Electric Line

MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES IN ALL DIRECTIONS	
Near the pole	300mm
Centre 2/3rds	Refer to Graph 1

Graph 1



These clearances in this section allow for sag and sway of the conductors. Refer to Schedule 2 of the Code for further details.

The direction of the clearance space from around the conductors are illustrated below

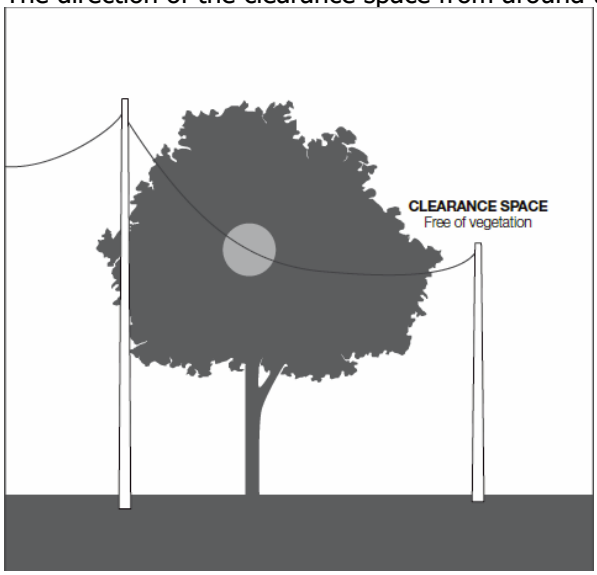
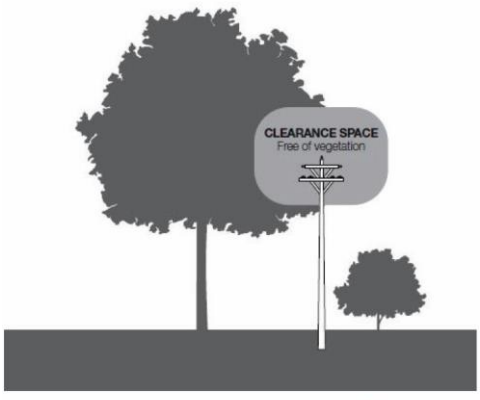


FIGURE 3—INSULATED ELECTRIC LINES IN ALL AREAS AND UNINSULATED HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINES (OTHER THAN 66 000 VOLT ELECTRIC LINES) IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS

Clauses 24 and 26, Graphs 1 and 3

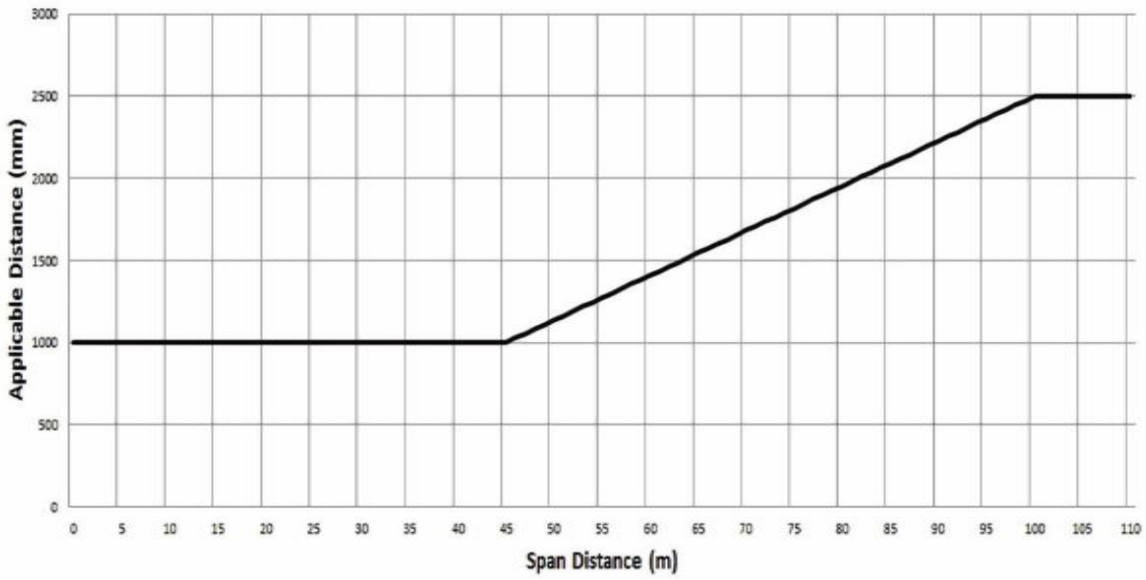


NOT TO SCALE

MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES SURROUNDING A LOW VOLTAGE UNINSULATED POWERLINE IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREAS

MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES IN ALL DIRECTIONS	
Near the pole	1000 mm*
Centre 2/3rds	Refer to Graph 2

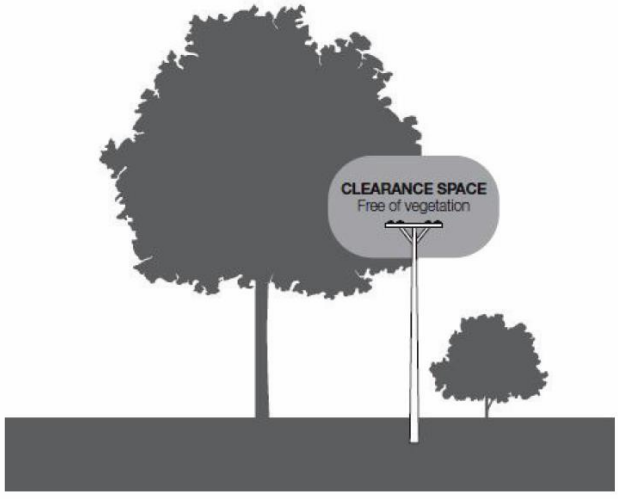
GRAPH 2



The Clearances in the above graph allow for sag and sway for spans up to 100m. For Spans greater than 100m an allowance for sag and sway is required. Very few spans if any are greater than 100m however Powercor will be consulted with if a span greater than 100m is identified to assist in determining the amount to allow for sag and sway.

FIGURE 4—UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINE IN A LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA

Clause 25, Graph 2

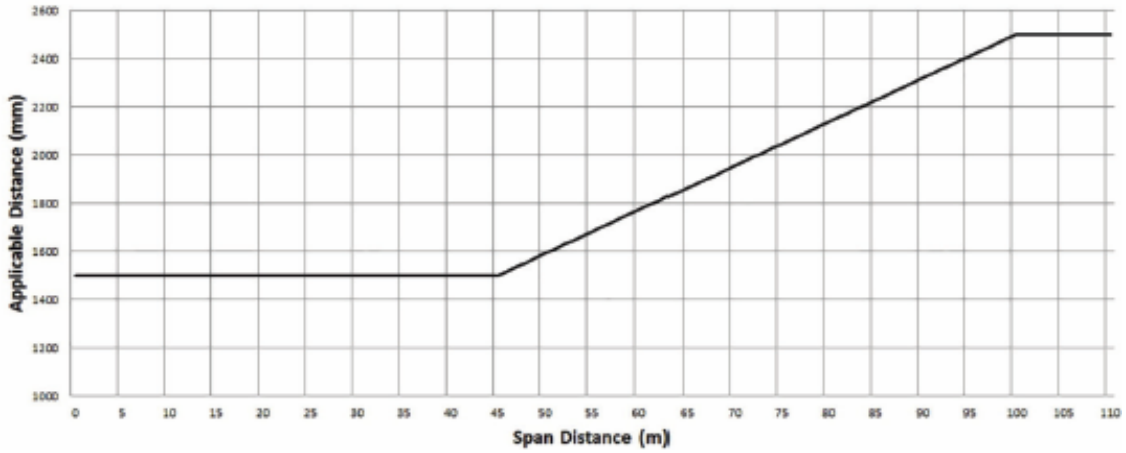


NOT TO SCALE

- MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES SURROUNDING AN UNINSULATED HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINE (Other than 66kV Electric Lines) in LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA

MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES IN ALL DIRECTIONS	
Near the pole	1500 mm*
Centre 2/3rds	Refer to Graph 3

GRAPH 3

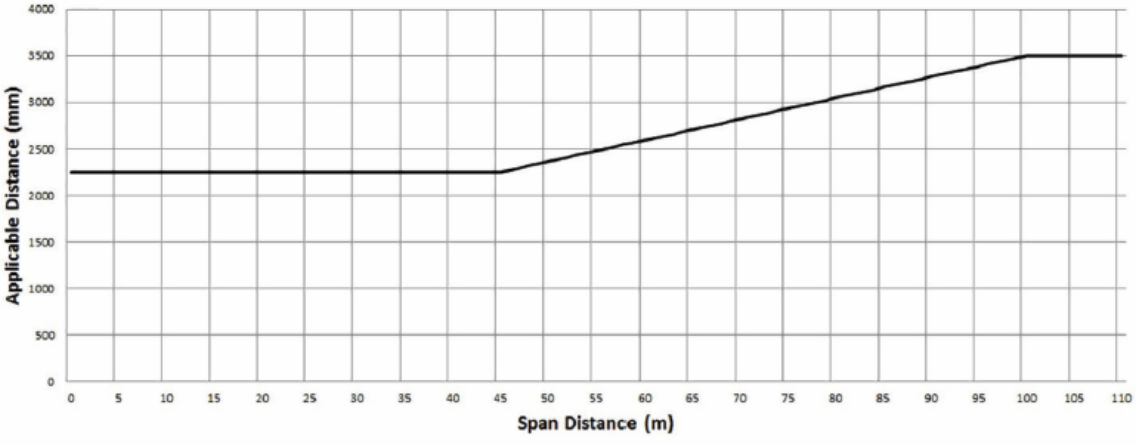


*The Clearances in the above graph allow for sag and sway for spans up to 100m. For Spans greater than 100m an allowance for sag and sway is required. Very few spans if any are greater than 100m however Powercor will be consulted with if a span greater than 100m is identified to assist in determining the amount to allow for sag and sway.

MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACE SURROUNDING AN UNINSULATED 66kV ELECTRIC LINE in LBRA

MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES IN ALL DIRECTIONS	
Near the pole	2250 mm*
Centre 2/3rds	Refer to Graph 4

Graph 4



*The Clearances in the above graph allow for sag and sway for spans up to 100m. For Spans greater than 100m and allowance for sag and sway Very few spans if any are greater than 100m however Powercor will be consulted with if a span greater than 100m is identified to assist in determining the amount to allow for sag and sway.

**MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES SURROUNDING AN—
UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE AND HIGH VOLTAGE (Other than 66kV Electric Line) in HBRA**

Surf Coast Shire has no HBRA within its Declared Area for the period of this plan.

**MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES SURROUNDING AN—
UNINSULATED 66kV ELECTRIC LINE in
HAZARDOUS BUSHFIRE RISK AREA**

Surf Coast Shire has no HBRA within its Declared Area for the period of this plan.

Contact with Powercor and changes to Powercor Network
Surf Coast Shire will formally meet with Powercor annually in the July August period of each year prior to the commencement of the Surf Coast Shire Declared Area Inspection and Cutting program. Outcomes from the meeting will include changes to the Electricity network within its Declared area, Non-compliant spans identified, Hazard trees identified, Customer complaints, Sag and sway allowance requirements and Network reliability. Minutes will be recorded and maintained for a minimum of 5 years. The scheduled meetings will occur as a minimum annually between Council and Distribution Business's to facilitate consultation and discussion of clearance issues such as:

- Programming and scheduled works
- Accessing live line clearing, suppression & shutdown coordination
- Performance
- Specific events
- General issues
- Network changes

During these meetings, any additional infrastructure that has been installed in Council's declared area will be advised by the Distribution Business.

Surf Coast Shire will liaise with the following Powercor contact:

Name of Company:	Powercor Australia
Position:	Council Liaison Officer
Name:	Leo Hourigan
Address:	Locked Bag 14090 Melbourne 8001
Telephone:	9683-4851
e-mail:	lhourigan@powercor.com.au

ii. Determining an additional distance that allows for cable sag and sway

The Clearance space to be maintained for the centre 2/3rds of spans is specified in Schedule 2 of the Regulations. A summary to be used for operational purposes is included in the charts above.

Spans in the LBRA Declared Area that are greater than 100m require additional distances to be added to allow for sag and sway. Surf Coast Shire currently have no spans recorded that are greater than 100m on its Tree database system.

Our inspector is required to assess the length of each span to determine the required clearance. Should the Inspector identify a span greater than 100m in length, Powercor liaison officer will be consulted to determine the required additional sag and sway allowance.

The records of the allowance per span that are provided by Powercor will be recorded on Surf Coast Shires Tree database system and maintained for future programs. Data collected will be maintained for a minimum of 5 years.

The records of these spans will be tabled in future meetings with Powercor to ensure the data remains current.

Surf Coast Shire Open Space Operations Coordinator will provide any spans on the Tree database system that are greater than 100m and the corresponding allowance for sag and sway to Inspector personnel prior to the commencement of the Inspection Program.

Employees and subcontractors employed in the process of Inspection are inducted into the ELCMP Reference Manual.

Council will base its program around the timelines in the Works Schedule in ***Appendix 23***.

4k. The procedures to be adopted if it is not practicable to comply with the requirements of AS 4373 while cutting a tree in accordance with the Code

The Municipal Association of Victoria advises Council to ensure the latest version of AS4373 is being referenced. In addition, Council Parks Officer maintains membership with the Council Arboriculture Association. Notifications of new or amended standards are forwarded to when they are released.

Surf Coast Shire Council strives for its internal staff and contractors to meet the pruning standard set out in AS4373 as far a reasonably practicable while completing cutting activities to clear vegetation from electrical assets.

Reasonably practicably in relation to AS4373 means that which is, or was at a time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring continued tree health and future tree safety, considering and weighing up all relevant matters including:

(a) The likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring – will the action create a defect, hazard, loss of tree health or aesthetic value in the present or future.
(b) The degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk - what will the impact be on the tree or future safety of the public.
(c) What the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know about:
(i) The hazard or the risk – must have adequate knowledge to determine the hazards risks
(ii) Ways of eliminating or minimising the risk – must have adequate knowledge in relation to alternative measures.
(d) The availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk – are other resources or techniques available to complete works to the standard.
(e) After assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk – does the cost required to complete works to the standard grossly outweigh the value of the tree.

Staff or contractors completing pruning works are required to complete all works to AS4373 as far as reasonably practicable which includes not removing more than 30% of foliage, not removing large structural limbs, using top/bottom cut method to prune to eliminate bark tearing. Where this cannot be achieved the site or trees are to be referred to Council's Parks Officer to make an assessment on whether it is reasonably practicable to deviate from AS4373.

Qualified and Trained Personnel

Council employees and contractors undertaking vegetation management activities shall have sufficient knowledge, qualifications, training, authorisation and experience appropriate for the task they are to perform to ensure tree activities are conducted in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.

All vegetation workers must complete Certificate II in ESI Powerline Vegetation Control. This course provides competencies for planning and carrying out vegetation control at and above ground level near

live electrical apparatus. For inspectors, this training must include the following modules; AHCPCM201A - Recognise plants and UETTDRVC24A - Assess vegetation and recommend control measures in an ESI environment. Specific roles and course codes are outlined in ***Appendix 22***.

Where a person performs multiple roles, they shall undertake the mandatory training for each of those roles. To operate High Risk Plant and equipment (e.g. EWP) the operator shall have the applicable High Risk Licence issued by Worksafe Victoria.

Induction training of all Council employee and contractors who are to work operationally on the line clearance program shall be undertaken prior to commencing or accessing the site. All employees and contractors must be inducted into the safety requirements for the contract and the site prior to being permitted to undertake works on the site. AS 4373 and the definition of "as far as practicable" will be outworked to personnel at the induction.

Where pruning to achieve clearance will not allow compliance with AS4373, Surf Coast Shire may elect to:

- Increase the pruning frequency to minimise the required pruning.
- Remove scaffold/ parent limbs initially to minimise future required pruning.
- Remove trees where the resulting pruning would leave trees unsuitable for retention.

Where the above situations occur, the Parks Officer at Surf Coast Shire is to be notified. Where trees are to be removed, relevant resident in the affected area are to be contacted in person or by a written notification card.

Plant and Equipment

The process for selection of appropriate plant & equipment involves the following considerations:

- Access to site.
- Voltage of overhead conductors - equipment suitably insulated and tested.
- Proximity of vegetation to conductors.
- Configuration of equipment.
- Reach/ height of equipment.
- Cutting tools proportional to material to be cut.

Once each of these points has been considered, the best fit for the task should be selected. Availability may also be a defining factor, where the best fit is not available other options may be considered, however must still be able to achieve acceptable pruning standards in a safe manner.

All items of plant and equipment (including contractor's plant) utilised on the contract must undergo a plant risk assessment/initial audit and all safety risks must be appropriately controlled prior to use of any plant or equipment on site. This can take the form of a *Health and Safety Audit* **ELCMP-004** (***Appendix 4***) or an approved Plant Risk Assessment from a qualified supplier.

Daily Plant Pre-Start Safety Checks are compulsory for all plant on site and must be undertaken at the beginning of each work shift prior to use or operation of the plant by the relevant operator. Specific *Daily Plant Safety Checklists* relevant and appropriate to the item of plant are to be used for this purpose – samples of each shall be kept in ***Appendix 15***.

Other audit form for plant and equipment are as follows:
Plant and Equipment Audit - EWP – **ELCMP-005** (***Appendix 5***)
Plant and Equipment Audit – Tipper/Chipper – **ELCMP-006** (***Appendix 6***)

Auditing

Council and contractors shall conduct regular inspections of work sites to ensure that cutting or removal is done in accordance with industry standards, including AS4373:2007 and they continually demonstrate compliance with the prescribed safety and environmentally responsible aspects of the industry.

Council is responsible for auditing of the vegetation management process including compliance to the requirements of this Plan. An annual *Audit Program* **ELCMP-002** has been created (***Appendix 2***).

Primary audits, such as OHS Systems, Environmental Management Systems, Quality Control, Traffic Management Procedures, etc., are targeted at the verification of systems of management and risk mitigation. These are further supported by field verification and compliance monitoring audits.

Primary audits are conducted by personnel who have suitable audit training and background. External specialist resources, which are experienced and have appropriate expertise in the relevant field, may be engaged to assist. Where appropriate Council and contractor's management are directly involved in these audits.

The audit schedule is reviewed annually to address any changes in business requirements, concerns from previous years, and the contractor's performance history. There are broadly four different types of audits within the schedule, relating to;

- Health and Safety – Safe work methods (e.g. General work methods, working near powerlines and tree clearing methods), equipment vehicles and plant, inductions, training and authorisation, traffic management.
- Compliance – General inspection and cutting compliance with programs, hazardous trees, stakeholder and defect management.
- Procedure/Work Instruction – Policies, work instructions, procedures, customer notification, data management and accuracy, reporting and documentation.
- Environmental – Important or significant vegetation, chemicals, weeds, noise, pruning technique and quality.

The audit process considers actual performance and outputs and then compares them against planned performance and expected outputs. Where a variation occurs, the item is noted and followed through to ensure corrective actions are taken and improvement opportunities are factored into plans to enhance future performance.

In addition to the audits carried out above, a *Code Compliance Audit* is conducted annually by Council in a format as per **ELCMP-013** (***Appendix 13***). This audit is designed to ensure Council's compliance with the Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance (the Code) contained in the Schedule to the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

The focus of the audit is on Council's systems, records and processes that have been designed and are used to manage Council's electric line clearance obligations. Compliance with the Code is strongly inferred by the tracking of the KPIs under **ELCMP-003** (***Appendix 3***). The audit under this section is designed to explicitly determine the extent of compliance with the Code. Any non-conformances identified will be addressed within agreed timeframes and with agreed methods. If a non-compliance is found to be a result of a Contractor not meeting its contractual obligations, the breach of compliance may be deemed by the Unit Manager as a breach of contract and may result in termination of the contract.

The annual review of the ELCMP will ensure that the latest version of AS4373 is being applied.

When vegetation pruning methods are unable to comply with the requirements of AS4373, the Parks Officer is to be notified. AS 4373 and the definition of "as far as practicable" will be outworked to personnel at the induction. Every action will be taken to ensure that vegetation pruning methods taken minimise the extent of pruning and the effects of such pruning on vegetation. The process above is not required when a tree is being trimmed back to established practices for that tree.

4l. A description of each alternative compliance mechanism in respect of which the responsible person has applied, or proposes to apply, for approval under clause 31 of the Code

This clause is not applicable to Council at this time. If an alternative compliance mechanism is required in the future, this ELCMP will be updated to reflect proper process to be followed.

4m. The details of each approval for an alternative compliance mechanism

i. that the responsible person holds

This clause is not applicable to Council at this time. If an alternative compliance mechanism is required in the future, this ELCMP will be updated to reflect proper process to be followed.

ii. that is in effect

This clause is not applicable to Council at this time. If an alternative compliance mechanism is required in the future, this ELCMP will be updated to reflect proper process to be followed.

4n. A description of the measures that must be used to assess the performance of the responsible person under the management plan

The Coordinator Parks and Open Space will conduct regular audits as per the *Audit Program* **ELCMP-002** (***Appendix 2***) to ensure that inspection (*Inspection Quality Audit* - **ELCMP-009** - ***Appendix 9***) and cutting (*Cutting Quality Audit* - **ELCMP-010** - ***Appendix 10***) has been completed in accordance with industry standards, including Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020, AS4373:2007 *Pruning of Amenity Trees* and best practice methods and according to the schedule.

Continual monitoring of historical work load indicators will take place utilising *Objective and KPI's Audit* **ELCMP-003** (***Appendix 3***) in respect to the number of:

- Identified vegetation clearance breaches to the code
- Emergency clearances
- Customer requests for line clearance
- Network operator requests for pruning
- Clearing not meeting quality requirements (AS4373 min.)

Council has considered the risk associated with the non-compliance and the population of Street Trees within the Declared Area and determined a 10% sample size to be adequate to mitigate the risks and meet the objectives of the plan.

If provided, non-compliance sites and outages data provided by Powercor are reviewed at the scheduled meetings.

Audit non-conformances are reviewed to identify the root causes. Any improvements identified that can be readily rectified are implemented immediately. The root causes are reviewed formally at operations meetings to determine an action plan to prevent reoccurrence or identify if further issues that are likely to arise from the same cause.

All audit forms are to be returned to Council for filing and non-conformance or improvements to be registered on the *Corrective Action Register* **ECLMP-014** (***Appendix 14***). The CAR is reviewed weekly to ensure all items are closed out.

Utilising this historical data, a range of benchmarks for intervention of non-compliance has been established.

- For internal audits a 90% minimum compliance benchmark is in place. This audit covers both clearance and quality of works to AS4373. Scoring less than this threshold requires investigation the program will not be recorded complete until additional works are completed and a new audit conducted. This process is performed by the Parks Officer. A range of performance related penalties apply within our externally contracted service, while works by internal staff are subject to individual performance management. This allows mechanisms and incentives for improvement.

- Analysis of work types, job numbers and works priorities completed each year are also used to give insight into the number of trees reaching intervention levels between pruning cycles. Review of works completed over consecutive visits can show trends in the performance of the current ELCMP. An increase in high and urgent priority works of greater than 10% triggers an investigation by the Parks Officer to investigate causes and implement improvement strategies where required.

- If supplied, compliance and outage results from Powercor are another useful tool to help monitor the performance of the plan. This will be measured on a number of events basis/month or year. Significant increases between periods would also warrant investigation.

When vegetation pruning methods are unable to comply with the requirements of AS4373, the contractor will consult with the Parks Officer to seek approval on the pruning method to be undertaken. The Parks Officer will make the final decision on the method of pruning and formal sign off/remarks is to be added to the *Daily Work Sheet* **ELCMP-018** (***Appendix 18***) that advice and approval has been sought from the Parks Officer. AS 4373 and the definition of "as far as practicable" will be outworked to personnel at the induction. Every action will be taken to ensure that vegetation pruning methods taken minimise the extent of pruning and the effects of such pruning on vegetation. The process above is not required when a tree is being trimmed back to established practices for that tree.

4o. Details of the audit processes that must be used to determine the responsible person's compliance with the Code

Primary audits are conducted by personnel who have suitable audit training and background. External specialist resources, which are experienced and have appropriate expertise in the relevant field, may be engaged to assist. Where appropriate Contractor and Council management are directly involved in these audits. Refer to **ECLMP-002** (***Appendix 2***) for *Audit Program*.

All audit forms are to be returned to Council for filing and non-conformance or improvements to be registered on the *Corrective Action Register* **ECLMP-014** (***Appendix 14***).

Any non-conformances or required improvement actions will be recorded on the audit and CAR and be implemented immediately and signed off when completed.

Any additional hazards/risks (or any risk controls that are not effective) identified by the audits must be recorded on the checklist, addressed immediately with appropriate risk control measures (agreed with the affected persons). All non-conformances shall be addressed within agreed timeframes and with agreed methods. All work activities relating to the extreme or high risks identified must cease until the risk has been effectively eliminated or controlled (if not possible to eliminate risk).

Control of Non-Conformances

The root cause for the Non-conformances are identified and monitored. Recurrence of the same non-conformance will be reviewed to determine the root cause of the problem. Non-conformances that are likely to result in a Safety hazard or not complying with a regulation are considered critical and must be dealt with immediately. Non-conformances that are not critical are reviewed at the Operations meetings and Annual Review and may result in further training and revision of this plan. Non-conformances may be treated as a breach of contract and as such, the contract may be terminated at the discretion of the Responsible Officer.

Powercor conduct inspections and may report trees to Council that it has recorded as non-compliant to the regulations. These items will be reviewed and items identified as not complying with the clearance requirements will be programmed to be cleared. The Unit Manager will decide if the items can be programmed in line with its annual program.

Any non-conformances identified by Council will be addressed within the timeframes that ensure compliance is maintained. The potential risk of a non-conformance can vary greatly and this will be evaluated and the Unit Manager will have responsibility for determining the rectification timeframes.

Any non-conformance will be rectified and any continued non-conformance shall be considered a non-conformance and outworked with the contractor as deemed necessary.

Annual Review and Continuous Improvement

Operations Meeting are carried out Monthly during the Electric Line Clearance Program. The results of the audits along CRMS data and other items that were noted as not going to plan will be reviewed. The purpose of the review is to identify strategies to prevent reoccurrence or identify if further issues are likely to arise and identify cost effective improvements and apply alterations where required for the drafting of the following year Electric Line Clearance Management Plan.

4p. The qualifications and experience that the responsible person must require of the persons who are to carry out the inspection, cutting or removal of trees in accordance with the Code

ESV has objectives, functions and responsibilities under the Electricity Safety Act 1998 (the Act). This includes the administration of Electricity Safety (General) Regulations 2019 (the General Regulations). This includes issuing a Certificate approval statement outlining the training requirements. For the purposes of the definition of qualified person in regulations 614, 616 and 617 of the General Regulations, the training certificate ESV approves is a certificate that specifies satisfactory completion of the National UET20319 Certificate II in ESI Powerline Vegetation Control. The certificate must be issued by a registered training organisation as defined in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

Additional requirements Regulation 616(2) of the General Regulations requires that a qualified person carrying out Vegetation Management Work in the vicinity of a protected aerial line must comply with

a) the Electrical Safety Rules for Vegetation Management Work Near Overhead Powerlines by Non-Electrical Workers, as published or amended from time to time by ESV; and
b) the Blue Book when working on or near high voltage electrical equipment; and

ESV sets the electrical safety rules that establish the minimum standards to be used, in addition to other occupational safety and health requirements, to enable safe vegetation management work in the vicinity of or near live overhead powerlines by persons not working for or under the control of an electricity asset owner but working for an other responsible person. Surf Coast Shire will work in accordance to these requirements as a minimum.

All vegetation workers must complete Certificate II in ESI Powerline Vegetation Control and ESV specified annual refresher as specified by the ESV. This course and refresher training provides competencies for planning and carrying out vegetation control at and above ground level near live electrical apparatus. Council will review the ESV training requirements prior to the development of each ELCMP.

Specific training requirements are tabled in ***Appendix 22***. This lists the course codes the worker must have been assessed as competent for each task performed. A usual progression for a worker is to attain the Certificate II modules (stream) to perform the role of a Ground Crew. To progress to clear trees from an EWP or climbing or to assess vegetation requires the specific modules for those tasks. The following lists the modules required to have been assessed as competent for these tasks.

The modules required clear trees from an EWP operator includes the requirement to have been assessed as competent for the Certificate II elective units UETTDRVC25A *Use elevated platform to cut vegetation above ground level near live electrical apparatus*, UETTDRVC33A *Apply pruning techniques to vegetation control near live electrical apparatus and* hold High Risk Work Licence - Boom-type Elevating Work Platform (WP).

The key training requirements for an Assessor includes the requirement to have been assessed as competent for the Certificate II elective units UETTDRVC24A *Assess vegetation and recommend control measures in an ESI environment* and AHCPCM201A *Recognise Plants*

The key training requirements for a Climber includes the requirement to have been assessed as competent for the Certificate II elective units UETTDRVC21A *Use climbing techniques to cut vegetation above ground near live electrical apparatus,* UETTDRVC33A *Apply pruning techniques to vegetation control near live electrical apparatus,* UETTDRVC34A *Undertake release and rescue from a tree near live electrical apparatus* and AHCARB204A *Undertake standard climbing techniques*

No person shall perform tree clearing work in the vicinity of live electrical apparatus unless the person:

a) Has completed a training course approved by ESV; and
b. has a standard of qualifications, proficiency and experience that enable the person to safely perform the work; and
c. has been endorsed in writing by the organisation (e.g. the employer) to perform the work; and
d. has documented a hazard identification and risk assessment; and
e. has implemented a risk management process to control hazards associated with the work; and
f. complies with 'Electrical Safety Rules for Vegetation Management Work near Overhead Powerlines by Non-Electrical Workers', as published or amended from time to time by Energy Safe Victoria.

The *Electricity Safety (*General*) Regulations* 2019 r. 616*(3)* refers to a qualified person as a person who holds a current certificate that is approved by Energy Safe Victoria specifying satisfactory completion of a training course in tree clearing.

All vegetation workers must complete Certificate II in ESI Powerline Vegetation Control and ESV specified annual refresher as specified by the ESV. The elective units for Electrical Line Clearance work roles of Elevated Work Platform (EWP) operator and Tree climber are as per below.

EWP Operator and EWP Safety Observer

- UETTDRVC33 - Apply pruning techniques to vegetation control near live electrical apparatus
- UETTDRVC25 – Use elevated platform to cut vegetation above ground level near live electrical apparatus
- TLILIC0005 – Licence to operate a boom-type elevating work platform (also equivalent is High risk work licence - WP)

Tree Climber and Climber Safety Observer

- UETTDRVC21 - Use climbing techniques to cut vegetation above ground near live electrical apparatus
- UETTDRVC33 - Apply pruning techniques to vegetation control near live electrical apparatus
- UETTDRVC34 - Undertake release and rescue from a tree near live electrical apparatus
- AHCARB204 - Undertake standard climbing techniques

This course and refresher training provides competencies for planning and carrying out vegetation control at and above ground level near live electrical apparatus. Council will review the ESV training requirements prior to the development of each ELCMP.

Suitably qualified arborist must hold the qualification of National Certificate Level III in Horticulture and Arboriculture, including the "Assess Trees" and "Identify Trees" modules, or an equivalent qualification and at least three years of field experience in assessing trees.

Included is compliance with relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory regulation, local government legislation, applicable industry Guidelines, Codes of Practices or other related requirements for safe work and access near live electrical and mechanical apparatus.

The Responsible Person that books training using external providers is responsible for checking that the RTO can provide the services and qualifications requested and ensuring that the RTO is an approved training provider meeting the requirements of Council.

Prior to engaging with an RTO which is not an approved training provider, an investigation should be done to ascertain the RTO's "fit" with Council. At a minimum the following must be considered: the RTO's level of experience with delivering training in our industry, their training methods and learning materials, the qualifications their trainers hold, their scope of registration for running nationally accredited training listed at www.training.gov.au outlining the information relating to Nationally Recognised Training Packages requirements and units of competency.

At the time of the Program Induction, a Personnel Training Matrix is obtained by Surf Coast Shire for everyone who is to work on the Declared Area Inspection and Cutting program. This matrix is cross referenced to Surf Coast Shires **ELCMP-022** (***Appendix 22***) to confirm compliance. The Personnel Training Matrix is used during the Health and Safety Audit **ELCMP-004** to confirm personnel on site are compliant with the Program requirements.

Council will ensure that all contract personnel are fully conversant with the work they are required to perform under the contract and that, before any work commences, they are qualified, trained, and/or suitably experienced and are competent to carry out their duties. In accordance with supplier contracts, a training matrix and training records of staff are provided prior to the commencement of works and the validity of which is checked during audits and prior to commencing each annual program.

The training needs of individual employees and sub-contractor personnel are determined by considering:
- the contract scope of works
- minimum qualification and experience requirements for the contract
- contract service objectives
- the management plans
- job task requirements
- regulations and requirements
- individual skill deficiencies

Refer to ***Appendix 22*** for training matrix.

Refresher training is required for some compliance training modules and its purpose is to provide the employee with an opportunity to recall and reinforce their previously acquired knowledge and skills. At this opportunity it is usual that a competence assessment is completed which may include a verbal, written and practical assessment. Refresher training may also include changes in legislation, changes to guidance material and information, created by returning staff after periods of extended leave or as a result of an incident investigation.

Induction training of all Council employees and contractors shall be undertaken prior to commencing or accessing the site. All employees and contractors must be inducted into the safety requirements for the contract and the site prior to being permitted to undertake works on the site.

As a minimum the Council/Contract Induction topics shall cover:
- Council Induction requirements
- Council Safety, Quality and Environmental Policies
- Site Management.

Inductions shall be co-ordinated by the Contractors Contract Manager.

Any persons who commence work during the life of the contract must undergo the same site induction training prior to commencing work on site. Refer to **ECLMP-016** (***Appendix 16***) for *Induction Checklist*.

Any employees or contractors identified to not have current training, qualification or authorisations as required will be stood down from working on the Program and will only be permitted to return to work for the Council when the deficiencies are rectified and at the Unit Managers discretion.

4q. Notification and consultation procedures

Council will ensure adequate notice is given to affected persons in regard to programmed line clearance works. Notification of Council's program of works will be undertaken in accordance with the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulation's 2020. Where Council intends to cut or remove a tree that is on public land or within the boundary of a private property which the responsible person neither occupies nor owns or where the tree is of cultural or environmental significance Council as the responsible person will give notice of the intended cutting or removal to all affected persons in accordance with the regulations.

Prior to the commencement of programmed works, a notice will be given by publication on the Surf Coast Shire Web site and/or in a newspaper circulating generally in the locality of the land in which the tree is to be cut or removed at least 14 days and no more than 60 days before the intended works. Those customers directly affected by works will also be notified in writing (refer ***Appendix 24***) and a Newspaper Notice will be advertised for the general public (refer ***Appendix 28***). Cutting shall not occur if the notification is less than 14 days and greater than 60 days. Work will cease until renotification occurs unless the cutting is required to maintain compliance with a regulation or make an unsafe situation safe.

Council will conduct minuted operations meetings during the inspection and cutting phases to ensure that the program is running to the Works Schedule (***Appendix 23***).

Where the tree intended for cutting or removal is a tree of cultural or environmental significance, notice will include the impact of the cutting or removal of the tree and the actions to be taken to minimise that impact. Decisions on removal or "clearing" of trees will be in accordance with ***Section 4h***.

By maintaining the annual inspection and cutting program and allowing for growth for individual species no urgent pruning or clearing should be required. In the case of urgent cutting or removal being required, Council will ensure that the process identified under "***Emergency Cutting and Pruning***" is followed, in accordance with the requirements of the Code.

4r. Dispute resolution procedures

If the vegetation is identified as being not compliant, the vegetation will be treated and cleared as per the urgent pruning process.

All enquiries should be managed to avoid disputes or complaints if reasonable to do so and the Surf Coast Shires Customer Service Strategy shall be complied with the current Customer Service Strategy. https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/About-us/Council/Policies-plans-strategies-and-reports/Plans-and-strategies. Disputes should be resolved as per the following process however at any stage an affected person may choose to raise a complaint via Surf Coast Customer Complaints Form: https://au.openforms.com/Form/97867da5-b92d-4d2a-9668-24634c47ca4d.

All disputes between Council and affected parties, Stakeholders or the Distribution Business will be managed in line with the following process. If there is a conflict between this process and the Distribution Company or ESV formal process, the Responsible Person may decide to alter this process.

For the purposes of dispute resolution, the following Responsible Person may be contacted where applicable with the requirements set out in this section.

Name:	Travis Nelson
Position:	Manager Operations
Address:	1 Merrijig Way, Torquay, VIC 3228
Telephone:	03 5261 0600
e-mail:	info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

First Level of Contact - The Contractor Employee endeavours to resolve any disputes arising from the execution of their duties in a fair and reasonable manner. Disputes cost time and money and reflect poorly on Council and the contractor's reputation. Disputes may be the result of a breakdown in communication prior to works or as a result of dissatisfaction with works.

Every attempt should be made to settle the dispute at the first point of contact to avoid unnecessarily escalating the incident. The contractor employee should explore all options within his authority in the consultation phase of the process in attempting to avoid disputes.

Reference to the Council Coordinator Parks and Open Space - Where a dispute cannot be settled the contractor employee will notify the Coordinator Parks and Open Space and provide a detailed briefing. Any correspondence from the Affected Person will be logged in the contractor quality system for response tracking. The Coordinator Parks and Open Space will review the dispute and explore all practical options at his disposal. If under the circumstances the Unit Manager is able to offer any further alternatives to what has been offered, these will be presented to the Affected Person by the contractor employee or the Coordinator Parks and Open Space if it is considered appropriate.

Reference to the Coordinator Parks and Open Space and Manager Operations - If the options identified by the Coordinator Parks and Open Space require higher management approval or if it is beyond the Coordinator Parks and Open Space's delegated level of authority, a detailed proposal will be presented to the Manager Operations for approval. If all options offered are unacceptable to the Affected Person the Manager Operations, shall consider the risks associated with the outstanding vegetation clearance in determining the final resolution of issue.

Reference to Arboreal Advisers - While all contractor employees have had training in tree identification, pruning techniques and tree physiology some special situations may require greater expertise. Advice may be sought from an arborist where the dispute requires an expert third party opinion on a matter relating to the tree or trees in question. Requests for this advice should be passed to the Coordinator Parks and Open Space who can arrange advice or provide contact details. The advice may be based on photographs and description supported by specimen leaves and fruit of the tree or it may require a site visit by the expert arborist. Copies of reports should be forwarded to the Coordinator Parks and Open Space for compilation. The reports will be made available to the contractor employees and across Council for reference.

Resolution - If agreement is reached then the agreed course of action shall be recorded in an agreement and signed by the Affected Person, Stakeholder or DB. In order to avoid any future dispute where the agreed action is to take place over a period of time a notation referring to the agreement should be made in the ELCMP Operations folder and filed as an Appendix.

No Resolution - If no agreement is reached, the parties in dispute may choose to refer the case to Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) or The Energy and Water Ombudsman (EWOV), as appropriate, for a mechanism for resolution. If the non-completion of the disputed work presents a fire or safety risk the Manager Operations and crew may be obliged by Code, to enter the property and complete the work.

Any customers who consider they have been poorly treated under this process are welcome to approach the EWOV for recourse. The EWOV is the last industry advocate available to settle tree related disputes. Further recourse may be available through the legal system.

Name:	Energy Safe Victoria
Address:	PO Box 262 Collins Street West VIC 8007
Telephone:	1800 800 158
e-mail:	info@esv.vic.gov.au

Name:	Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria) Ltd
Address:	GPO Box 469 Melbourne 3001
Telephone:	1800 500 509
e-mail:	ewovinfo@ewov.com.au

Refer to **ELCMP-019** (***Appendix 19***) for *Dispute Resolution Process*.

The dispute resolution procedure is available for inspection at Council offices during normal business hours. The procedure is also published on Council's website.

Address of Principle office:	1 Merrijig Way, Torquay, VIC 3228
Normal business hours:	8.30 am - 5.00 pm (Monday to Friday)
Telephone:	03 5261 0600
Weblink:	http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/Home

4s. if Energy Safe Victoria has granted an exemption under regulation 11 relating to a requirement of the Code, details of the exemption or a copy of the exemption.

Council has not requested an exemption.

Obligations Relating to the Management Plan

The following sections are as per Regulation 10 of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

1. This regulation applies in relation to the management plan that a responsible person is required to prepare under regulation 9

2. The responsible person must provide a copy of the management plan to Energy Safe Victoria within 14 days after a written request from Energy Safe Victoria or such longer period as specified by Energy Safe Victoria in the written request.

Council will provide a copy of the plan when requested.

3. The responsible person, if requested in writing to do so by Energy Safe Victoria, must provide further information or material in respect of the management plan within 14 days after the written request or such longer period as specified by Energy Safe Victoria in the written request.

Council will provide further information or material to ESV within 14 days or as requested and specified by ESV.

4. The responsible person must amend the management plan if instructed to do so in writing by Energy Safe Victoria within 14 days after the written instruction or such longer period as specified by Energy Safe Victoria in the written instruction.

Council will amend this plan within 14 days or in a timeframe as instructed.

5. The responsible person must not contravene a requirement of the management plan if the management plan is approved by Energy Safe Victoria.

Council will not contravene the requirements within this approved plan if ESV approve this plan.

6. The responsible person must ensure that a copy of the current management plan is published on the responsible person's Internet site.

The plan published on the Surf Coast Shires website is to be used as the current version of the plan.

The Electric Line Clearance Management Plan is published on Council's website at http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/Home. The Coordinator Parks and Open Space will provide the Surf Coast Shire IT department with any revisions and the updated copy of the ELCMP prior to 1 July of each year and will ensure it is available and superseded revisions are removed.

Exemptions

The following sections are as per Regulation 11 of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

1. Energy Safe Victoria may exempt a responsible person from any of the requirements of these Regulations subject to any conditions specified by Energy Safe Victoria.

This clause is not applicable to Council at this time. There are no exemptions in place. If an exemption is required in the future, this ELCMP will be updated to reflect proper process to be followed. The exemption will also be published on the Council website and a link provided.

2. A responsible person who is granted an exemption under this regulation must comply with the conditions (if any) of the exemption.

This clause is not applicable to Council at this time. There are no exemptions in place. If an exemption is required in the future, this ELCMP will be updated to reflect proper process to be followed. The exemption will also be available at the principal Council office for inspection.

Address of Principle office:	1 Merrijig Way, Torquay, VIC 3228
Normal business hours:	8.30 am - 5.00 pm (Monday to Friday)
Telephone:	03 5261 0600

Clearance Responsibilities

The following sections are as per Part 2, Division 1 of the Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance.

3- 1. A responsible person must ensure that, at all times, no part of a tree for which the person has clearance responsibilities is within the minimum clearance space for an electric line span.
and
3- 2. Subclause (1) is subject to clauses 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Subject to sub clauses 4, 5 6 and 7, Council will ensure no part of our Council trees is within the minimum clearance space.

4. Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around insulated low voltage electric lines

Insulated low Voltage Electric Lines (Structural Branches)
- incorporating ELECTRICITY SAFETY (ELECTRIC LINE CLEARANCE) REGULATIONS 2020, Part 2, Division 1, Schedule 4

Responsibility
Exceptions to the required minimum clearance space for Insulated Low Voltage cables may occur in the Surf Coast Shire Declared Area. The Parks Officer is responsible for managing and implementing all stages of this procedure.

Procedure
Prior to the commencement of the Scheduled annual inspection, all previous years Exception 4 classed vegetation will be provided to the inspector. During scheduled annual inspections, the inspector will record "E4" on the Work Instruction Street where the span is an insulated LV line and the branch is wider than 130mm at the point at which it enters the minimum clearance space and the branch is more than 150mm from the line if the span is <= 40m in length or 300mm from an Insulated Low Voltage Electrical Lines that is >40m in length.

The Parks Officer will determine if the branch is to be cleared or considered to be managed as an "Exception 4" tree.
If the branch is to be cleared the work instruction "E4" will be crossed out and the branch will be trimmed as per normal works.
If the Parks Officer decides to retain the branch, he / she will arrange for
(1) A suitably qualified arborist to inspect the tree and advise if there are no structural defects that could cause the branch to fail and make contact with the line
(2) Completes a risk assessment, using the Exception Risk Assessment Form ***Appendix 26***, on the branch and implements the measures to mitigate the risks identified.
(3) If the above items are completed and meet the requirements; the Records of the above assessments are kept for 5 years as per Surf Coast Shires Archiving process and are available for use as required. The tree location will be listed in subsequent ELCMP's and inspected every 14 months.

Data collection
The following applies to instances of Vegetation where an Exception 4 is being managed:
The Work Instructions and Exception Risk Assessments are recorded as per directions above. They are stored in the Operations folder of that current year by the Parks Officer and then archived as per the Surf Coast Shires Archive process for a period of 5 years. The Parks Officer will also ensure an E4 is recorded against the electronic record of the span containing the Exception 4 Vegetation.

Clearance Assessments
Assessments for trees under this category are assessed by a suitably qualified Arborist who will visually estimate the current clearance and apply an additional distance for estimated growth. The Suitably qualified arborist will present Council with documents to verify the requirements as listed in the Training Matrix, **Appendix 22** are met.

Exception Audits
Vegetation managed under this process will be audited concurrently with Inspection Quality Audits **Appendix 9**. The Auditor will visually assess the tree from the ground and ensure that he / she is satisfied that the clearances specified in the assessments are satisfactory and an appropriate safety outcome has been achieved.

5. Exception to minimum clearance space for small branches around insulated low voltage electric lines

Insulated low Voltage Electric Lines (Small Branches)
- incorporating ELECTRICITY SAFETY (ELECTRIC LINE CLEARANCE) REGULATIONS 2020, Part 2, Division 1, Schedule 5

Responsibility
The Parks and Gardens Coordinator is responsible for managing and implementing all stages of this procedure.

Procedure
Surf Coast Shire will refer to its tree database date records when pruning works are undertaken. Branches will not be required to be cleared from Insulated low voltage lines where an inspection identifies the presence of branches that meet the requirements for exception as outlined in Schedule 1, Part 2, Section 5 of the Code:
- Are less than 10 millimetres wide at the point where it entered the minimum clearance space, and
- Vegetation clearance works were recorded in the previous twelve months.

6. Exception to minimum clearance space for small branches growing under uninsulated low voltage electric lines in low bushfire risk areas

Uninsulated low Voltage Electric Lines
- incorporating Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020, Part 2, Division 1, Clause 6.

Responsibility
Exceptions to the required minimum clearance space for Uninsulated Low Voltage cables in the LBRA may occur in the Surf Coast Shires Declared Area. The Parks and Gardens Coordinator is responsible for managing and implementing all stages of this procedure.

Procedure
Prior to the commencement of the Scheduled annual inspection, all previous years Exception 6 classed vegetation will be provided to the inspector. During scheduled annual inspections, the inspector will record "E6" on the Work Instruction Street where a branch is identified as meeting the *"Exception 6 Criteria*" listed below.

The Parks Officer will determine if the branch is to be cleared or considered to be managed as an "Exception 6" tree. If the branch is to be cleared the work instruction "E6" will be crossed out and the branch will be trimmed as per normal works. If the Parks Officer decides to retain the branch, he / she will ensure all trees that apply to this section meet the following criteria:

Exception 6 Criteria

a. The electric line is uninsulated low voltage in the LBRA and
b. the branch is less than 10 millimetres wide at the point at which it enters the minimum clearance space and is no more than 500 millimetres inside the minimum clearance space; and
c. the point at which the branch originates is below the height of the electric line; and
d. in the case of a branch that comes within the minimum clearance space around the middle 2 thirds of the span, the span is fitted with—
   (i) one conductor spreader if the length of the span does not exceed 45 metres; or
   (ii) 2 conductor spreaders if the length of the span exceeds 45 metres; and

A spreader is not required to be fitted to the span if the branch comes within the minimum clearance space around the first or last sixth of the span.

e. within the last 14 months—
   (i) a suitably qualified arborist has inspected the tree of which the branch is a part; and
   (ii) the responsible person has completed an assessment of the risks posed by the branch using the Exception Risk Assessment Form ***Appendix 26***; and
   (iii) the responsible person has implemented measures to effectively mitigate the identified risks.

6.3 If the above item is completed and meet the requirements; the Records of the above assessments are kept for 5 years as per Surf Coast Shires Archiving process and are available for use as required. The tree location will be listed in subsequent ELCMP's and inspected every 12 months.

6.4 If (1) or (2) or are not completed by 31 December, the vegetation will be cleared as per routine clearing.

Data collection
The following applies to instances of Vegetation where an Exception 6 is being managed:
The Work Instructions and Exception Risk Assessments are recorded as per directions above. They are stored in the Operations folder of that current year by the Parks Officer and then archived as per Surf Coast Shires Archive process for a period of 5 years. The Parks Officer will also ensure an E6 is recorded against the electronic record of the span containing the Exception 6 Vegetation.

Clearance Assessments
Assessments for trees under this category are assessed by a suitably qualified Arborist who will visually estimate the current clearance and apply an additional distance for estimated growth. The Suitably qualified arborist will present Council with documents to verify the requirements as listed in the Training Matrix, ***Appendix 22*** are met.

Exception Audits
Vegetation managed under this process will be audited concurrently with Inspection Quality Audits ***Appendix 9***. The Auditor will visually assess the tree from the ground and ensure that he / she is satisfied that the clearances specified in the assessments are satisfactory and an appropriate safety outcome has been achieved. All requirements in 6.1 and 6.2 must be complied with to comply with this exception.

7. Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines in low bushfire risk areas

Uninsulated low Voltage Electric Lines
- incorporating Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020, Part 2, Division 1, Schedule 7

Responsibility
Exceptions to the required minimum clearance space for Uninsulated Low Voltage cables in LBRA may occur in the Surf Coast Shire Declared Area. The Parks and Gardens Coordinator is responsible for managing and implementing all stages of this procedure.

Procedure
Prior to the commencement of the Scheduled annual inspection, all previous years Exception 7 classed vegetation will be provided to the inspector. During scheduled annual inspections, the inspector will record "E7" on the Work Instruction Street where a branch is identified as meeting the criteria in (a) through to €.

The Parks Officer will determine if the branch is to be cleared or considered to be managed as an "Exception 7" tree.
If the branch is to be cleared the work instruction "E7" will be crossed out and the branch will be trimmed as per normal works.
If the Parks Officer decides to retain the branch, he / she will arrange for all trees that apply to this section are:

(a) the electric line is an uninsulated cable, low voltage electric line located in a low bushfire risk area; and

(b) in the case of a branch that comes within the minimum clearance space around the middle 2 thirds of the span, the span is fitted with—

(i) one conductor spreader if the length of the span does not exceed 45 metres; or

(ii) 2 conductor spreaders if the length of the span exceeds 45 metres; and

Note

A spreader is not required to be fitted to the span if the branch comes within the minimum clearance space around the first or last sixth of the span.

(c) the branch is more than 130 millimetres wide at the point at which it enters the clearance space; and

(d) the branch is no more than 500 millimetres inside the minimum clearance space; and

(e) within the last 14 months—

(i) a suitably qualified arborist has inspected the tree of which the branch is a part; and

(ii) the arborist has advised the responsible person that the tree of which the branch is a part does not have any visible structural defect that could cause the branch to fall and make contact with the electric line; and

(iii) the responsible person has completed an assessment of the risks posed by the branch; and

(iv) the responsible person has implemented measures to effectively mitigate the identified risks.

A responsible person who leaves a branch within the minimum clearance space for an electric line span in accordance with subclause (2) must keep records of the following matters for 5 years—

(a) each inspection referred to in subclause (2)(e)(i);

(b) all advice referred to in subclause (2)(e)(ii);

(c) each assessment referred to in subclause (2)(e)(iii);

(d) all measures referred to in subclause (2)(e)(iv).

Assessed by a suitably qualified arborist who has determined the branch/es entering the clearance space do not have any visible structural defects that could cause the branch to fail and make contact with the electric line using the Exception Risk Assessment Form ***Appendix 26***,

(1) If the above item is completed and meet the requirements; the Records of the above assessments are kept for 5 years as per Surf Coast Shire Archiving process and are available for use as required. The tree location will be listed in subsequent ELCMP's and inspected every 12 months.

(2) If (1) or (2) or are not completed by 31 December, the vegetation will be cleared as per routine clearing.

Data collection

The following applies to instances of Vegetation where an Exception 7 is being managed:
The Work Instructions and Exception Risk Assessments are recorded as per directions above. They are stored in the Operations folder of that current year by the Parks Officer and then archived as per Surf Coast Shire Archive process for a period of 5 years. The Parks Officer will also ensure an E7 is recorded against the electronic record of the span containing the Exception 6 Vegetation.

Clearance Assessments

Assessments for trees under this category are assessed by a suitably qualified Arborist who will visually estimate the current clearance and apply an additional distance for estimated growth. The Suitably qualified arborist will present Council with documents to verify the requirements as listed in the Training Matrix, ***Appendix 22*** are met.

Exception Audits

Vegetation managed under this process will be audited concurrently with Inspection Quality Audits ***Appendix 9***. The Auditor will visually assess the tree from the ground and ensure that he / she is satisfied that the clearances specified in the assessments are satisfactory and an appropriate safety outcome has been achieved.

9. Responsible person may cut or remove hazard tree

- incorporating Part 2 Division 1 Schedule 8.

A hazard tree is a tree that:

- a suitably qualified arborist has assessed the tree in regard to foreseeable conditions and advised the tree or part of the tree is likely to fail and will contact an electric line if this occurs.

All identified hazard trees are to be cleared to ensure compliance is maintained and in a time, that prevents the tree from entering the clearance space. Hazard trees are to be cleared only when it is safe to do so and if a Hazard tree cannot be removed in a timely manner, Powercor are to be contacted to discuss other means of removal or Powerline disconnection.

As part of the annual inspection Council will seek to identify vegetation infringing on clearance space within the declared area. The Inspection includes the Hazard Space outside the clearance and regrowth spaces. Trees in the Hazard space that are identified and require clearing will cleared without further assessment if the tree is urgent or contains significant faults that are deemed to be a risk to the public.

In a situation where Council identifies a tree that is likely to fall onto or otherwise come into contact with an electric line that is not urgent or a risk to the Public, Council will assess the tree using a suitably qualified arborist who holds the minimum qualification of National Certificate Level III in Horticulture and Arboriculture, including the "Assess Trees" and "Identify Trees" modules, or an equivalent qualification and at least three years of field experience in assessing trees. Note: For the purpose of this Plan, a hazard tree is a tree that possesses hazardous faults which if not actioned, will negatively impact distribution assets. These trees may possess characteristics such large cavities, severe decay, major cracks etc.

In situations where the arborist's assessment confirms the likelihood of contact with the electric line having regard to foreseeable local conditions including weather and around instability, Council will remove or cut the hazard tree as per the Code. In the event of a hazard tree being identified as a culturally significant, environmentally significant or habitat tree, Council will where possible minimise the impact on the tree or fauna as previously outlined, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the code, the schedule to the code or to make an unsafe situation safe.

Hazard trees that are found to NOT to be the responsibility of Council will be reported to Powercor by phone or email.

Trees reported by residents or other authorities will be recorded on Councils CRMS system. Trees reported that are Council's responsibility will be actioned as required by this plan. Trees that are not Council's responsibility will be recorded and forwarded to Powercor.

10. Cutting or removal of:

- **Indigenous trees**
- **trees listed in a planning scheme to be of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance**
- **trees of cultural or environmental significance must be minimised**

This requirement is covered in *Section 4h*.

11. Cutting or removing habitat for threatened fauna

This requirement is covered in *Section 4h*.

12. Cutting or removing habitat for threatened fauna

This requirement is covered in *Section 4h.*

Clearance Responsibilities - Notification, Consultation and Dispute Resolution

The following sections are as per Part 2, Division 3 of the Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance.

16. Responsible person must provide notification before cutting or removing certain trees

This requirement is covered in *Section 4q*.

17. Responsible person must publish notice before cutting or removing certain trees

This requirement is covered in *Section 4q*.

Clearance Responsibilities - Additional Duties of Responsible Persons

The following sections are as per Part 2, Division 4 of the Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance.

20. Duty relating to the safety of cutting or removal of trees close to an electric line

Powercor are the responsible Distribution Business and owner of assets located within the declared areas which Council is responsible for.

Where concerns are raised in relation to the safety of maintenance activities associated with maintaining vegetation clearances inside of the declared area, Council will make contact with Powercor to discuss concerns. Final recommendations will be provided by ORP Manager in an email to be recorded in Council's electronic data capture system.

Council has no clearance responsibilities in relation to a span of an electric line that is part of a railway supply network or tramway supply network.

Owner, operator or DB process for providing assistance:

Name of Company:	Powercor Australia
Position:	Council Liaison Officer
Name:	Leo Hourigan
Address:	Locked Bag 14090 Melbourne 8001
Telephone:	9683-4851
e-mail:	lhourigan@powercor.com.au