Bass Strait Islands Vegetation Management Plan

Distribution Powerlines

TITLE	Bass Strait Islands Vegetation Management Plan
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VERSION	1.0

Hydro Tasmania

Contents

Hydro Tasmania pays respect to the rich, long and ongoing history of the Traditional Owners and Custodians and their connections to land, sea and community.

The mountains, natural lakes and rivers that capture and channel water for hydropower are rich in Aboriginal history, culture and tradition. We acknowledge ongoing connection to culture and custodianship of the lands and waters of places we share. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

1. Introduction

This Vegetation Management Plan, Version 1.0, was approved in early September 2025 to replace HSES0913 Bass Strait Islands Vegetation Management Standard 2021. This version (1.0) incorporates amendments from various reviews from late 2023 to mid-2025.

1.1 Overview

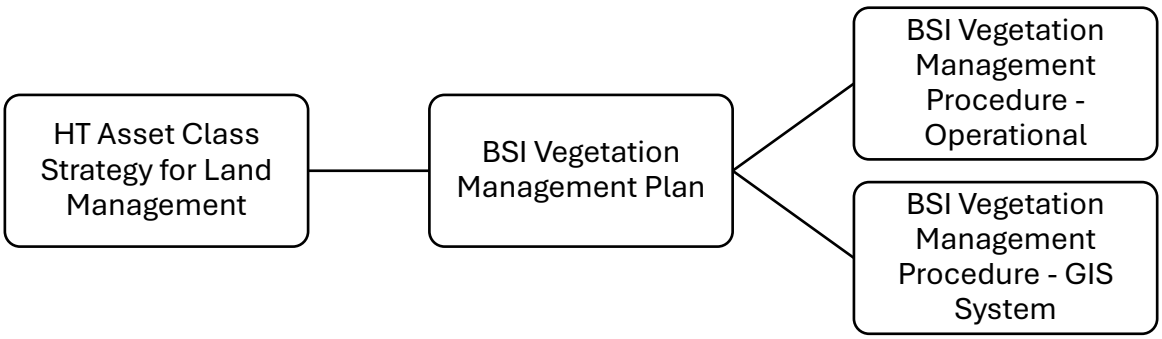
This plan outlines the obligations and limitations related to vegetation management in the vicinity of the distribution powerlines on the Bass Strait Islands (BSI). Specific guidance is made to Hydro Tasmania's (HT) Environmental Management System (EMS) to ensure vegetation is managed in a way that minimises risks to Hydro Tasmania's assets and people, stakeholder relations and the environment in accordance with relevant legislation.

1.2 Role of Hydro Tasmania

As the Distribution Network Service Provider on BSI, Hydro Tasmania is responsible for ensuring the distribution of electricity on both islands with minimal disturbance from surrounding vegetation.

Hydro Tasmania will follow accepted standards regarding vegetation management around distribution powerline assets on BSI by balancing the requirements to keep electrical infrastructure safe and provide a reliable service to customers while also preserving natural and heritage values.

1.3 Document Hierarchy



1.4 Document Approval Process

Name	Position	Accountability	ACTION	DATE
Craig Kershaw	Regional Production Manager North	Plan Owner	Endorsed	8/9/2025
Brad Johnson Plan Endorser	Manager Production Services	L3 Plan Endorser	Endorsed	5/9/2025
Carolyn Maxwell	Manager Environment	L3 Plan Endorser	Endorsed	8/9/2025
Paul McNab Plan Sign-off	Head of Production Operations	L2 Plan Sign-off / approvals	Approved	10/9/2025

1.5 Document Review

This management plan is designed to be reviewed biennially, as it outlines both internal and external standards that remain relatively constant over time. By conducting a thorough review every two years, the plan ensures that all strategies and protocols are aligned with industry best practices, regulatory requirements, and organisational goals.

The next review date for the vegetation management plan is scheduled for ***September 2027***.

2. Legislation and Compliance

2.1 Legislative obligations

In some instances, additional approvals may be required. The preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will help identify any additional approvals that may be required. The HT Environment & Heritage Team can assist with preparing the EIA and required approvals.

2.1.1 Chapter 8A of the *Tasmanian Electricity Code*

Vegetation management activities must be undertaken in accordance with the standards as outlined in Chapter 8A of the Tasmania Electricity Code (the Code). This Plan is based on the requirements of the Code and relevant Hydro Tasmania policies and procedures.

The purpose of the Code is to establish minimum standards and practices for maintaining vegetation around power lines, including maintaining a minimum clearance space. The Code allows for both pruning and clearance methods to be utilised by Distribution Network Service Providers, with consideration to balancing the various risks, costs and stakeholder expectations.

2.1.2 *Electricity Wayleaves and Easements Act 2000 s.11(3) and s. 11(7)*

Grants rights to access public or private land for the purpose of maintaining vegetation by creating a virtual 12-metre-wide easement (6m either side of the centre line) around existing distribution infrastructure.

The exercise of powers conferred by an easement may be limited by the Code and is subject to compliance with the Code.

2.1.3 Electricity Supply Industry Act 1995 (Tas)

The clearing of vegetation in accordance with the Code, to the extent necessary for the protection of electricity infrastructure or public safety, is exempt from the requirement for a planning permit under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*.

2.2 Statutory approvals and caveats

2.2.1 Forest Practices Act 1985 & Forest Practices Regulations 2017

In accordance with r.4(b) and r.4(l) of the Forest Practices Regulations, a Forest Practices Plan (FPP) is not required for clearance vegetation as part of the maintenance of existing electricity infrastructure.

New electricity infrastructure may require these approvals under State or Commonwealth laws.

2.2.2 The Biosecurity Act 2019 & Biosecurity Regulations 2022

Provides statutory obligations for weed & disease management based on the status and locations of specific weed species and the requirement for statutory weed management plans (SWMP) to be developed for declared weeds. While, environmental weeds are not listed under legislation, and are not legally required to be controlled, they have the potential to pose a threat to ecological values. The General Biosecurity Duty (GBD) came into effect in March 2021 (as part of the Act) and requires all HT employees and contractors to take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent, eliminate, or minimise biosecurity risks, including the containment, reduction, and eradication (if possible) of environmental and declared weeds.

2.2.3 Threatened Species Protection Act 1995

Where it is likely that a state-listed threatened species will be impacted by works, an application for a 'Listed Taxon Permit' must be submitted to the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Tasmania and approved prior to works commencing.

2.2.4 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The role of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, and Water (DCCEEW) in enforcing the EPBC Act is to protect and conserve threatened flora, fauna, and threatened native vegetation communities.

Where an *action* is likely to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance (MNES), it must be referred to the Commonwealth Minister for Environment for consideration and approval prior to works commencing.

Approval for vegetation management activities is not required for:

- Vegetation management works that existed prior to August 2000;
- standard works that have do not have an impact on MNES since that time; or
- works approved under the EPBC Act do not require further assessment or approval.

2.2.5 National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002

The *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002 (NPRM Act)* regulates the management, use and development on reserved land in Tasmania. Administered by the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS), the NPRM Act applies to land such as national parks, conservation areas, and wildlife sanctuaries.

Where no Management Plan exists for a reserve, the powers afforded under the *Electricity Supply Industry Act 1995* remain unaffected, authorising vegetation management works in accordance with the Code and other relevant legislative powers.

In the case of land where a Management Plan is in place for a reserve, statutory powers may be fettered and as such may limit activities that can be done without approval from the PWS. These work must take into

account the requirements of the management plan and may require formal consultation and assessment by PWS. This may require a Reserve Activity Assessment or consent to be provided prior to commencement of work

2.2.6 Conservation covenants

In some instances, conservation covenants may exist on land, binding owners to protect the natural values of the land for perpetuity. Where conservation covenants exist, limitations on the property management may exist. Covenants are typically between the landowner and the relevant Minister and will require the consent of all parties for any works not contemplated by the covenant.

2.2.7 Other considerations

On King Island, there is a pronounced importance in minimising the clearance of native vegetation, as only 30% of the island's native vegetation remains. This 30% threshold has been identified as an 'ecological tipping point' and is being very closely managed by the Forest Practices Authority (FPA).

Any vegetation clearing outside of an electricity easement must be undertaken under a Forest Practices Plan certified by the FPA. Proposed clearance of vegetation outside of the clearance and regrowth spaces will require consultation with HT's Environment and Heritage Team.

In all instances relating to the environmental statutory approvals (as listed above), seek guidance from HT's Environment and Heritage Team.

2.3 Environmental Impact Assessment

During the planning phase of vegetation management, an assessment must be performed to identify impacts on the environment and heritage values. For each package of vegetation management work, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should be completed to document the review on environmental, heritage and stakeholder matters.

The two types of EIAs for BSI vegetation management include:

- An EIA for Standard Vegetation Management works (see Section 3) that does not impact threatened natural values will only require the template EIA to be completed by the program owner and does not require sign-off by the Environmental team. These EIAs are typically used to document assessments related to 'standard vegetation management' works only as outlined in Section 3. All EIAs should follow the new EIA Management Process, including the correct naming convention and approval.
- An EIA for Non-standard Vegetation Management Works (see Section 4) will be required if it meets the definition of non-standard work or if there is potential for impact on environmental values rated as moderate or above. The EIA for Non-standard vegetation work will require review and approval by the Environment team before works can commence, per the Hydro Tasmania Environmental Impact Assessment Process.

Refer to the HSE Hazards, Risk and Opportunity Procedure to help determine whether the works require a formal EIA to be completed.

Assessing environment and heritage-related values at a site can be achieved by using the HT Web Map, engaging with Hydro Tasmania's Environment Team. Additional information could also be acquired through local knowledge, maps and other reports on the area.

3. Standard Vegetation Management Works

For the purposes of this document, 'standard vegetation management works' relates to maintenance within the permitted extents outlined in the Code , and does not impact the following:

- State or commonwealth-listed threatened flora.
- State or commonwealth-listed threatened vegetation communities.
- PWS managed land.
- Public reserves.
- Land where a conservation covenant is present
- Declared weed species
- Infrastructure built post 2000

3.1 Vegetation management spaces

3.1.1 Clearance Space

The minimum vegetation clearance space varies with the type of distribution powerline installed and the risk of fire ignition at that location (see Tasmanian Electricity Code: Prescribed Vegetation Clearance Space). Vegetation clearance spaces are designed to provide fire safety, as well as reliability and continuity of electricity supply.

3.1.2 Regrowth Space

The regrowth space varies with the species of vegetation, the quality of the pruning or clearing, the micro-environment and the pruning and clearing cycle. Information on regrowth rates can be obtained from Hydro Tasmania's Environment Team.

Regrowth spaces = Average Annual Growth x Number of years in the Pruning & Clearing Cycle

The regrowth space was considered during inspections of vegetation for the development of the Vegetation Management GIS Web Application for BSI.

3.1.3 Hazard Space

The hazard space is the area outside the clearance and regrowth space where trees or limbs, due to their unsafe condition, pose a hazard to the safety of a distribution powerline. The hazard space varies with the species of vegetation and the extent of exposure to adverse weather conditions.

The hazard space was considered during inspections of vegetation for the development of the Vegetation Management GIS Web Application for BSI.

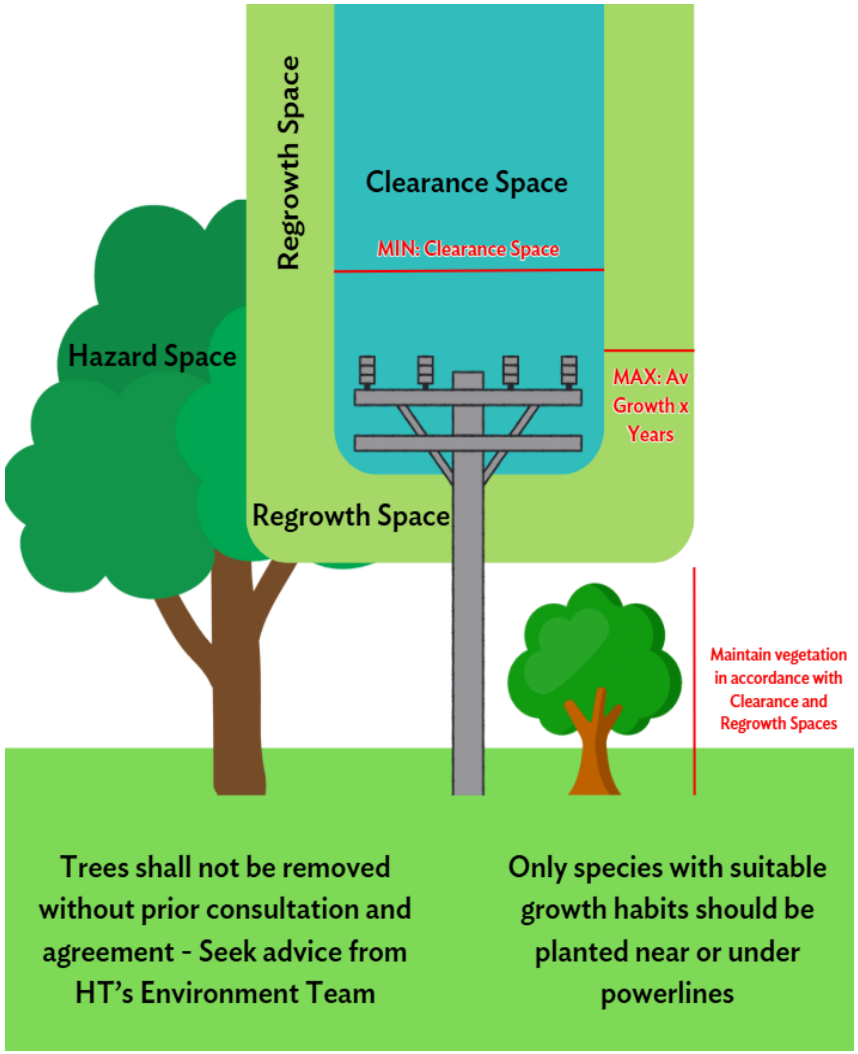


Figure 1: Vegetation Management Near HV and LV Bare Conductors for BSI. Refer to TEC clearance space dimensions. Trees should not be removed from the Hazard Space without prior consultation, a risk assessment of their ecological value, and agreement with landowners.

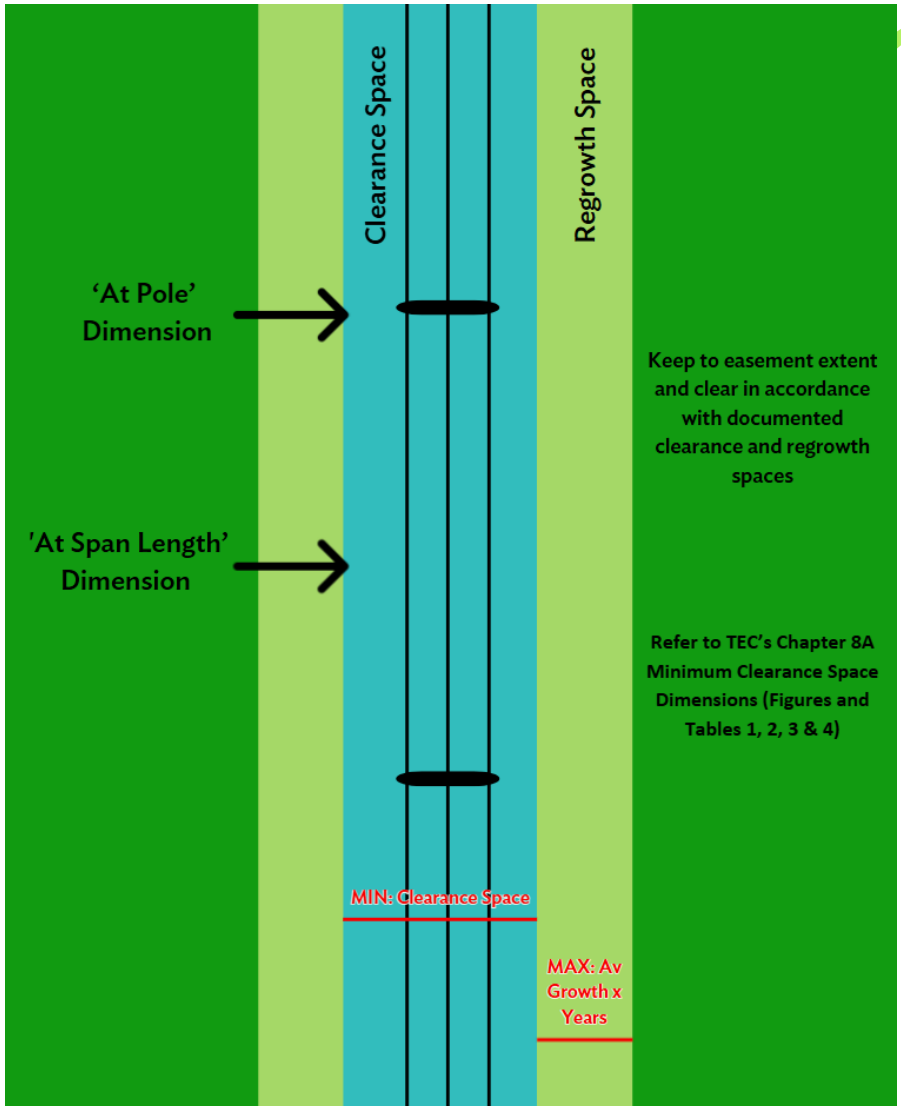


Figure 2: Vegetation Clearance and Regrowth Space Along a Distribution Powerline. Maximum horizontal vegetation clearance must be in accordance with Clearance and Regrowth Spaces.

3.2 Standard vegetation management dimensions

3.2.1 Clearance of Vegetation

Proposed clearance outside of the dimensions below (Table 1) should undergo consultation with HT's Environment and Heritage Team and landowners. If the species impacted outside of routine maintenance are state or commonwealth-listed communities, the FPA will need to be consulted.

3.2.2 Horizontal Regrowth

The horizontal regrowth space is typically the average annual growth multiplied by the number of years in the pruning and clearance cycle, including the clearance space.

Note the BSI annual growth rate is 0.5 – 1 meter / per year (Table 1).

Table 1: Assumed Estimated Growth Rate for BSI.

Island	Estimated Growth Rate (per year, in meters)	Basis of Estimation
King Island	1	Rainfall Soil nutrient conditions
Flinders Island	0.5	Local Knowledge Published vegetation descriptions

3.2.3 Vertical Regrowth Above

Above the distribution powerlines regrowth and clearance width extents, a 'clear to the sky' approach to vegetation management must be applied to remove all vegetation above the distribution asset to the width of the minimum vegetation clearance space plus the allowed regrowth space. This area must be completely free of vegetation, given the threat of bushfire is 'High' on BSI. No overhang vegetation in this space is permitted.

3.2.4 Vertical Regrowth Below

Below a distribution powerline, vegetation should be maintained in accordance with the calculated clearance and regrowth spaces. Native shrubs should be maintained at a hedged level where possible.

A summary of the total vegetation clearance around distribution powerlines is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Standard Vegetation Management Extents

Area	Allowed Clearance
Total Horizontal	Must be in accordance with the calculated clearance and regrowth spaces within the electricity easement.
Total Vertical Above Distribution Line	No maximum, 'clear to the sky' to the width of the horizontal dimensions.
Total Vertical Below Distribution Line	Must be in accordance with the calculated clearance and regrowth spaces within the electricity easement.

3.3 Tasmanian Electricity Code's prescribed vegetation clearance space

Chapter 8A of the Tasmanian Electricity Code (TEC) sets dimensions of minimum vegetation clearance space for different types of aerial bundled cables, powerlines and conductors, which must be complied with.

Table 3: Aerial bundled cable and insulated service cable vegetation clearance space requirements in all directions

Type of cable	Vegetation Clearance Spaces/Point of Maximum Sag – All directions			
	At Pole	At Span Lengths		
	All spans (m)	Span ≤ 40 m	Span 40 - 70 m	Span 70 - 100 m
Aerial bundled cable	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.9
Insulated service cable (LV & HV)	0.5	0.6	1.0	-

Table 4: Un-insulated wire conductors vegetation clearance space requirements – vertical dimensions.

Type of Powerline and Conductor	At Pole	Vegetation Clearance Spaces / mid span – Vertical						
	All spans	Span ≤ 40 m	Span < 60 m	Span < 80 m	Span < 100 m	Span < 125 m	Span < 150 m	Span > 150 m
Bare LV all	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0
Bare HV Small	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.5
Bare HV Medium	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.0	2.5

Bare HV Large	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5

Table 5: Un-insulated wire conductors vegetation clearance space requirements – horizontal dimensions.

Type of Powerline and Conductor	At Pole	Vegetation Clearance Spaces/ mid span - Horizontal At Span Lengths							
	All spans	Span ≤ 40 m	Span < 60 m	Span < 80 m	Span < 100 m	Span < 125 m	Span < 150 m	Span > 175 m	Span > 200 m
Bare LV All	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	2.5	3.0	3.5	-	-
Bare HV Small	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.5
Bare HV Medium	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.5	3.0	4.0	4.5
Bare HV Large	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.5	5.5

3.4 Pruning and clearance cycle

The pruning and clearing cycles are based on practical factors, including local growing conditions and the anticipated vigour of the regrowth of the species involved, as well as the use of the land, community values, and the utility and amenity the vegetation provides to the area.

A combination of risk rating (Table 6), assumed growth rate (Table 1), and the urgency of treatment (Table 7) is used to determine the cycle, which varies by location.

The pruning and clearing cycle is indicated in the Vegetation Management GIS Web Application by the 'Vegetation Management Priority' formed by periodic inspections.

Table 6: Risk Rating

Risk Rating	Definition
Extreme	Where vegetation is growing into clearance space and is touching electricity infrastructure, or there is an imminent risk of a fall.
High	Where vegetation, if it remains in its current state, will continue to grow into clearance space (if not already) and will come into contact with or fall onto the electricity infrastructure.
Moderate	Where vegetation is offset (i.e. not directly under electricity infrastructure), however, there is still a risk of side fall. This also takes into consideration current height and growth rate (i.e. an imminent risk of fall is considered an extreme risk).
Low	Where vegetation is of a species that generally has a lower height potential and growth rate, i.e. pasture or crops, coastal scrubs (limited growth heights and natural wind pruning),

Review	Where there is still a need to review in the future, particularly in circumstances where there is a change in vegetation type, unexpected growth rate, or characteristics, etc.

Table 6: Vegetation Treatment Priorities

PRIORTY	DEFINITION
Immediate	Vegetation requires immediate pruning or clearing (within 30 days).
P3M	Vegetation that will require pruning or clearing within 3 Months.
P6M	Vegetation that will require pruning or clearing within 6 Months.
P1Y	Vegetation that will require pruning or clearing within 1 to 5 Years.
P2Y	
P3Y	
P4Y	
P5Y	
NP	Vegetation will not require pruning or clearing within the next 5 years.

3.5 Stakeholder notification

For all standard vegetation management works that do not constitute 'non-standard vegetation management work' (Refer to Section 4), at a minimum, landowners only require a notification 7 days prior to works commencing.

4. Non-standard Vegetation Management

Any works that could impact natural values and require regulatory authorisation (Refer to Section 2.2) or exceed the calculated dimensions in Section 3.2 are considered to be 'non-standard' for the purposes of this document. Works can be identified as potentially non-standard vegetation management by first referencing the Hydro Tasmania Map Viewer. Vegetation parcels listed under the EPBC Act must also be checked for Existing Use Rights by a Subject Matter Expert.

A natural values review and an Environmental Impact Assessment must be prepared for all non-standard vegetation management works prior to undertaking any site works, with the exception of emergency work (Section 4.1). These EIAs must be reviewed and approved by the Environment team before works can commence in accordance with the Hydro Tasmania Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure.

The following constitutes non-standard vegetation management works as it impacts:

- State or Commonwealth listed threatened flora (Refer to Sections 2.2.3 & 2.2.4).
- State or Commonwealth listed threatened native vegetation communities or fauna habitat (Refer to Sections 2.2.3 & 2.2.4).
- Important vegetation or location
- Parks & Wildlife Services managed land (Refer to Section 2.2.5).
- Public reserves (Refer to Section 2.2.5).
- Land where a conservation covenant is present (Refer to Section 2.2.6).
- Vegetation clearance exceeding standard extents (Refer to Section 3.2).
- Hazardous trees.
- Weed management.
- Emergency clearing.

Visibility of the environment and heritage-related values for a particular site can be achieved by using the HT Web Map, and engaging with Hydro Tasmania's Environment and Heritage Team. Additional information, such as important vegetation or locations, could also be acquired through local knowledge, maps and other reports on the area.

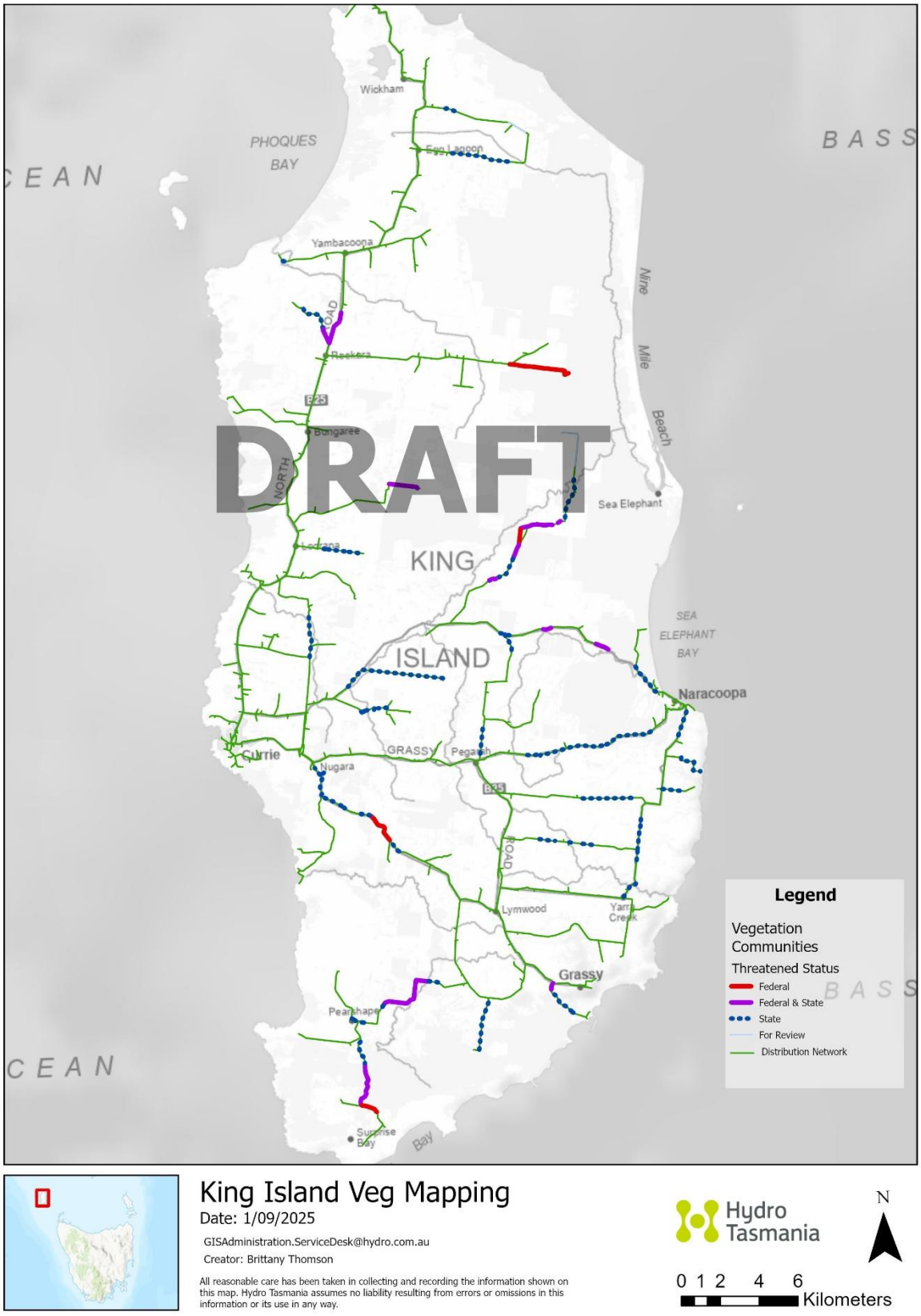


Figure 1: Locations of threatened vegetation communities under distribution infrastructure.

4.1 Emergency situations

In emergency situations, Hydro Tasmania may remove vegetation that poses an **immediate** risk in accordance with its powers under the *Electricity Supply Industry Act 1995*, that is necessary for the protection of electricity infrastructure or the protection of public safety. Hydro Tasmania must notify the landowner or occupiers if practicable prior to works commencing, otherwise as soon as possible upon completion, and is liable to pay reasonable compensation for damage caused.

After the vegetation works are completed, Hydro Tasmania must notify the landowner or occupiers as soon as practicable and seek retrospective approval for any applicable State or Federal permits required.

Emergency is defined in the *Emergency Management Act 2006 (s.3)* as:

- An event that endangers, destroys or threatens to endanger or destroy human life, property or the environment, or causes or threatens to cause, injury or distress to persons; and requires a significant response from one or more of the statutory services; or
- A significant threat of the occurrence of an event of a kind referred to in the text above in respect of which it is appropriate to take measures to prevent that possible resulting event; or to mitigate the risks associated with that threat and that possible resulting event.

The EPBC Act 1999 (s 212, 231 and 255) states that a certain action is not an offence if it is reasonably necessary to deal with an emergency involving a serious threat to human life or property.

4.2 Vegetation activities outside prescribed limits

Managing vegetation beyond the standard calculated dimensions specified in Section 3.2 may require approval from the FPA and the landowner.

In some situations, vegetation cannot be pruned to meet the requirements of this plan across successive pruning and clearance cycles without compromising the vegetation's character, amenity, and utility value, or encouraging vigorous regrowth.

In the longer term, this could cause the vegetation to become unstable, unhealthy and a hazard to the public and the distribution powerline.

An assessment of the vegetation's conservation value and appropriate consultation with HT's Environment and Heritage Team will help determine if the vegetation removal is permitted. A completion of an EIA for Non-standard Vegetation Management will be reviewed and approved by the HT Environment team. Approval and permission from the relevant landowner and the FPA must be given prior to commencement of works.

4.2.1 Hazardous Trees

Hazardous trees are positioned outside the regrowth space and/or the electricity easement (i.e. in the hazard space) yet may still pose a risk to infrastructure. Therefore, a comprehensive risk assessment in the form of an EIA and correct species identification should be completed prior to conducting the vegetation maintenance of such trees.

Trees should not be removed from the hazard space without prior consultation, a risk assessment of their ecological value, and agreement with landowners

4.3 The use of herbicides on native vegetation

Using herbicides to manage native vegetation is not an acceptable practice to manage vegetation. The only approved methods for native vegetation removal are manual and mechanical-based approaches.

4.4 Weed management

Hydro Tasmania has a legal obligation or "duty of care" in respect to biosecurity, and the management of weeds around the distribution powerlines on BSI. The management of weeds around Hydro Tasmania's distribution powerlines on BSI must be undertaken with the consent of landowners.

Managing weeds around HT's assets is also in the company's best interest, as it demonstrates due care and protects the safety of assets, with weeds being highly prone to fire.

A variety of methods can be used to manage weeds, including manual, mechanical, and herbicide-based approaches, with permission and collaboration from the relevant landowners. A skilled and licensed contractor should undertake works to readily identify the target species, advise on the best treatment method, and determine whether any follow-up treatment will be required.

The only instance where the use of herbicides may be permitted is to control weeds that are within the distribution powerline easement and must only proceed with the permission and consultation with the landowner.

The following activities may permit the use of herbicides as part of vegetation management works around distribution powerlines:

- Managing hazardous weeds that impede work sites by hand pulling, cutting and wiping with herbicide (plan with relevant landowners).
- Treating small areas of declared or environmental weeds as part of a community weed management program (plan with adjacent landowners and managers, council, PWS, etc.).

To treat weeds and/or other pests for commercial purposes, a commercial operator's license must be obtained. Workers who apply chemical products under the supervision of a licensed operator must hold a relevant Certificate of Competency.

An exemption exists where a business only uses less than 1 litre of chemical product, and this use is incidental to the main purpose of the business. Small amounts are considered to be any agricultural chemical product that is registered, packaged and labelled for use as a home garden product in Tasmania.

4.5 Stakeholder consent

For all non-standard vegetation management works, landowner consent and the relevant statutory approvals (Refer to Section 2.2) must be granted to proceed with works other than those relating to emergency.

4.6 Failure to comply with obligations

If Hydro Tasmania do not follow the legal obligations outlined in the vegetation management standards of this document, risks to brand and reputation and legal action could result.

4.7 Restoration

Potential environmental restoration projects could be negotiated with stakeholders and regulatory authorities. These could include:

- Restoring threatened native vegetation or threatened fauna habitat on HT or stakeholder land.
- Restoring threatened native vegetation or threatened fauna habitat on private land (with permission from landowners).
- Develop a plan that could be part of an agreed offset with relevant authorities (e.g., the FPA) or an ongoing commitment by HT to demonstrate due care and best practice across BSI.

5. Stakeholder Engagement

See Sections 3.5 and 4.5 relating to the need for notification and consultation only for standard vegetation management works and consent from landowners and relevant regulatory authorities for all non-standard works apart from emergency clearing. According to the EMS Stakeholder Needs, Expectations and Communications Register, interested parties such as property owners and occupiers should be notified of environmental impacts, opportunities and vegetation management through their preferred communication channel or varied means if no preferred method is known.

5.1 Distribution Networks Service Provider Responsibilities

Hydro Tasmania will provide the public with information on vegetation matters to ensure that pruning or clearing activities near distribution powerlines can be undertaken in accordance with environmental standards. This may involve letters, posters, flyers and digital information using clear, simple language:

- Providing advice on the need to be compliant with the TEC minimum clearance space dimensions and FPA expectations including the landowner's responsibilities and Hydro Tasmania's responsibilities for managing vegetation clearance and how compliance can be achieved.
- Providing advice on vegetation species and their growth habits.
- Providing information on suitable vegetation species for planting near distribution powerlines.

  Providing a publicised contact point within the organisation for vegetation management queries and complaints.

5.2 Customer Responsibilities

In accordance with Clause 8A.4.2 of the TEC, the responsibility of the customer is, at their own expense, to maintain safe clearances between vegetation on the customer's property and electrical infrastructure providing supply to the customer's electrical installation. Exceptions may exist for HV powerlines.

These responsibilities are outlined in the customer's individual contracts, the Customer Charter and the Service and Installation Rules.

As the Distribution Network Service Provider on BSI, Hydro Tasmania is responsible for keeping vegetation outside the clearance space around distribution powerlines.

5.3 Notification and consultation

The distribution network on BSI traverses numerous properties, including public and private land. Under different circumstances associated with vegetation management activity, actions required by Hydro Tasmania will vary. For standard vegetation management works, notifications should aim to be informative, explain why compliance is necessary and state the proposed time of the vegetation management works with enough lead-time for property owners and occupiers to receive the notification and be able to ask questions if need be.

It is *strongly advised* to seek written acknowledgement of the required vegetation management works to be performed *prior to works commencing* with sufficient lead-time to ensure the communication is received. Refer each section associated with relevant works to determine whether, at a minimum, notification, consultation or consent is required to go ahead with works.

5.4 Established practice

Where there have been no changes to established practices, notification or consultation with the occupiers (i.e. lease, licence or permit over the land) or of the land must occur, providing reasonable notice before commencing vegetation management works.

Where no one is in actual occupation of the land, notices to landowners may be published in locally distributed newspapers.

5.5 Changes to established practice

Consultation and negotiation with landowners and occupiers must occur if the proposed vegetation management works will change from the established practice.

A simple written explanation should be provided in advance of works detailing the proposed changed method and extent of vegetation management works, including:

- Disposal of debris resulting from pruning or clearing.
- Avoiding transfer of noxious weeds and diseases.
- Implementing measures to prevent bushfires from starting.
- The use of any chemicals for weed management purposes.

5.6 Independent native vegetation management

Hydro Tasmania workers must not be involved in any additional vegetation clearance activity beyond that associated with maintaining clearance space around electrical infrastructure.

It is not in the interest of the business for Hydro Tasmania to be associated financially or materially in external vegetation clearance activities by landowners. Contractors working on behalf of Hydro Tasmania cannot undertake additional work for surrounding landowners as part of their work for Hydro Tasmania.

5.7 Disputes

Disputes with landowners or occupiers may arise from decisions made by Hydro Tasmania in carrying out vegetation management works. Hydro Tasmania should endeavour to resolve any dispute in accordance with the Complaint Management Procedure and in collaboration with the Engagement Team. If it cannot be resolved through this process, works required under the legislation may still be undertaken while the complaint can be referred to the Ombudsman.

6. Definitions

Bare Means, in relation to a conductor, not insulated.

Bass Strait Islands (BSI) Means King Island and Flinders Island.

Clearance space A space surrounding a distribution powerline which should be clear of vegetation at all times.

Distribution Network Service Provider A person who engages in the activity of owning, controlling, or operating a distribution system. Hydro Tasmania is the Distribution Network Service Provider for the BSI.

Distribution powerline An overhead electricity line, operated by a Distribution Network Service Provider.

Easements (or wayleaves) Those areas surrounding Hydro Tasmania's assets which legally provide access for maintenance purposes.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) An assessment of potential environmental impacts performed in accordance with Hydro Tasmania's Environmental Management system.

Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 **(EPBC Act)** Commonwealth legislation for the protection and conservation of Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES)

Emergency as defined in the *Emergency Management Act 2006 s.3* (see Section 4.1) Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 s.212, 231 and 255.

Forest Practices Authority (FPA) The regulator of the *Forest Practices Act 1985* who regulate forest practices including clearing of trees and threatened native vegetation.

Forest Practices Plan (FPP) A plan that must be prepared and certified by a Forest Practices Officer that provides details of the operation area, boundaries, roads, snig tracks, landings, bridges, streams and forest areas retained for conservation purposes. They also include prescriptions that protect natural and cultural values, planned harvest systems, and reforestation.

General Biosecurity Duty (GBD) A legal obligation that reinforces the importance of shared responsibilities and the need for Government, industry and the community to work together to maintain a strong biosecurity system under the *Biosecurity Act 2019*.

Hazard space The space outside the vegetation clearance space and regrowth space in which trees or limbs due to their unsafe condition are a potential hazard to the safety of a distribution powerline under the range of weather conditions that can reasonably be expected to prevail.

Important Vegetation – Locations recognised by relevant authorities or bodies as containing 'important vegetation'. The definition can be found in the TEC Ch8A.2.4.

Important Locations - Locations with historical, cultural, geo-correlation or aesthetic value. The definition can be found in the TEC Ch8A.2.5.

Maintenance All routine actions necessary for retaining an asset as near as practicable to its original configuration and condition, or reducing its deterioration.

Minor environmental impact Under the *Electricity Supply Industry Regulations 2008* works of minor environmental impact are the clearing or lopping of trees, branches or other vegetation to the extent necessary for the protection of electricity infrastructure or public safety.

Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) The government body who aims to protect the significant values under the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*.

Pruning and clearing cycle The frequency of successive pruning or clearing which the Distribution Network Service Provider judges as optimal for maintaining the clearance space taking account of recurrent costs, community values, negotiation with the landowner, and utility and amenity in the area.

Regrowth space The space beyond the clearance space that should be cleared to allow for anticipated vegetation regrowth for the period of the pruning and clearing cycle.

Reserves Includes formal reserves such as national parks, conservation areas, etc., as well as informal reserves such as streamside reserves.

Reserve Activity Assessment (RAA) A PWS process to guide decisions about appropriate use or development and the management of associated environmental impacts in Tasmania's reserves.

Tasmanian Electricity Code (TEC) Means the Tasmanian Electricity Code as amended or substituted from time to time, issued under the *Electricity Supply Industry Act 1995*.

Vegetation management work Means the pruning, cutting, trimming or felling of, or application of herbicides to, vegetation, where any part of the vegetation is or may come within, or the work requires any person, tools, equipment or vehicle to come within, the safe approach distance for live overhead distribution powerlines.

Workers Any person who carries out work for Hydro Tasmania including work as an employee, contractor, subcontractor, self-employed person, apprentice or trainee, work experience student, employee of a labour hire company placed with a 'host employer' and volunteers.