

Tuesday, 23 January 2024

Ausgrid begins work on innovative Merriwa Microgrid

Ausgrid has commenced the delivery of its first microgrid which will ensure off-network power supply to key business and community services in Merriwa during extreme weather outages.

The Merriwa Microgrid, to be located at the Ausgrid Depot and delivered in partnership with Yurika in the first half of 2024, will mean 28 properties deemed essential by the local community can continue to operate during what would normally have been an outage.

Ausgrid's Group Executive of Customer, Assets & Digital, Junayd Hollis, said the early work has commenced to ensure all 28 properties within the microgrid's catchment area have the infrastructure required to support the connection.

"This is a key innovation trial to demonstrate how Ausgrid can best support communities to be increasingly resilient in the face of extreme weather and extended outages, no matter where they live on our network," Mr Hollis said.

"The microgrid is the first of its kind on the Ausgrid network and has been built in consultation with the community, delivering the services they need, when they need them the most.

"Ausgrid hopes by building this infrastructure that Merriwa residents can maintain their normal routines as much as possible when severe weather strikes."

The essential services deemed critical by the community include the pharmacy, grocery and fuel providers, while the RSL and Country Women's Association will also be connected to enable them to support the community.

Upper Hunter Shire Council Mayor, Maurice Collison, said the microgrid will help local business and community resilience, while powering the RSL will help it to provide emergency relief for community members.

“We're extremely pleased to welcome Yurika to the Merriwa microgrid project, an initiative that already promises to be transformative for our community. It's not just about power; it's about empowering our residents and businesses to be more resilient and sustainable,” Cr Collison.

“This project is another shining example of what can be achieved when the community, local government, and innovative companies come together for the greater good.”

Yurika has a proven track record of integrating effective renewable energy solutions into remote communities.

Yurika Executive General Manager, Belinda Watton, said, “We are absolutely delighted to work closely with Ausgrid and the Merriwa community to enhance energy resilience and strengthen the bonds that make our communities thrive.

“We're really looking forward to the many benefits that microgrid technology will bring for communities, businesses and the broader Australian energy system into the future.”

For more information on the Merriwa Microgrid and community hub visit, www.ausgrid.com.au/merriwamicrogrid

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