

# Food & Fibre Gippsland Inc.

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**Food & Fibre  
Gippsland**

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5 January 2021

Ms Kami Kaur  
General Manager, A/g  
Australian Energy Regulator  
GPO Box 520  
Melbourne VIC 3001

via email: [VIC2021-26@aer.gov.au](mailto:VIC2021-26@aer.gov.au)

## **Response to Powercor Revised Proposal 2021-2026: Request to upgrade Tyrendarra, Strathdownie Cape Bridgewater and Gorae West to three-phase power**

The purpose of this letter is to express support for upgrading single phase power to three phase infrastructure in the Tyrendarra area of South West Victoria. To achieve the regions' goals of renewable energy and water sustainability leadership, as well as to maintain and enhance the position as a world class tourism destination and one of Victoria's largest food and fibre producers, infrastructure that supports innovation and business growth is required.

Whilst three-phase power infrastructure is challenged across the State, including in our Gippsland area, we write this communication to support our industry colleagues in South West Victoria in the above noted proposal request.

Investment in regional infrastructure unlocks:

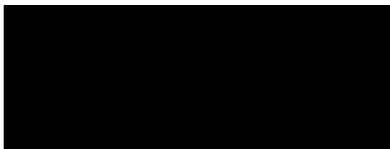
- economic growth and scaling up of key industries such as food and fibre, driving the State economy – proving particularly robust in withstanding the challenges of climate change and the current pandemic
- significant investment in renewables, irrigation, high tech applications and machinery, the Internet of Things and smart farming
- new job creation, upskilling, better servicing of customers through improved turnaround times, and enhanced function of social, education and community facilities, and
- a positive flow-on effect to affiliated industries such as visitor economy, retail, education, hospitality, and other regional sectors.

Furthermore, we note that regions are potentially disadvantaged by evaluation of infrastructure proposals being informed by population density. This impacts regional areas twice – firstly in the evaluation process where fewer people are falsely equated to reduced investment value, and secondly, where the user-pays model means regional customers pay disproportionate fee infrastructure upgrades.

We understand there are calls to re-examine this approach in terms of its unintended negative impact on regional communities and we strongly support this.

We urge you to empower Victoria's Great South Coast businesses, residents, and wider community to invest, build resilience and sustainability, and take advantage of opportunities to strengthen supply chains and local manufacturing.

Yours sincerely,



Nicola Pero  
Chief Executive Officer