



# Renewable energy generation (utility scale)

Compliance and enforcement priority 2022–23

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<p><b>Why is utility scale renewable energy generation a priority?</b></p>	<p>Renewable energy solutions are evolving and new technology introduced to the market. These involve complex electrical installations and network connections where safety risks are unknown. If duty holders fail to understand and manage these risks there will be an increased risk of harms to people and property.</p> <p>During 2021, ESV investigated several fire incidents that occurred on commercial scale solar and battery storage, as well as incidents involving windfarm infrastructure. The investigations and subsequent action by ESV highlighted the need for greater regulatory focus to ensure that the owners and operators of these complex installations address energy safety.</p>
<p><b>Who has the compliance obligation?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electricity generation licensees.</li> <li>• Owners and operators of renewable energy complex electrical installations.</li> <li>• Specified operators (operators of above ground electric lines in high bushfire risk areas who are not MECs).</li> <li>• Licensed electrical workers and registered electrical contractors.</li> <li>• Suppliers of electricity and renewable energy equipment, components and appliances.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How does the risk or non-compliance occur?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonable care is not taken to ensure that all parts of the installation are safe and operated safely.</li> <li>• Equipment forming part of renewable energy installations is not safe to be connected to an electricity supply, or does not comply with prescribed Standards (AS/NZS 3820).</li> <li>• The equipment is installed or operated outside its design parameters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What compliance action will ESV take?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auditing of:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– commercial solar installations</li> <li>– wind farms</li> <li>– other utility scale generation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Production of guidance for utility scale installations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What enforcement action may ESV take?</b></p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• issue infringement notices</li> <li>• issue directions</li> <li>• prosecute</li> <li>• prohibit or recall unsafe or non-compliant electrical equipment used for renewable energy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What are the targets?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three wind farm audits.</li> <li>• Three commercial solar installation audits.</li> <li>• Auditing of other utility scale generation as proposed or constructed.</li> </ul>

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<b>What will be measured?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of audits performed.</li><li>• Non-compliances identified (monitored as a percentage).</li><li>• Enforcement action taken.</li></ul>
<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved regulatory activities, informed by the data, themes and trends from identified non-compliances, which increase compliance levels and reduce safety issues and risks.</li></ul>
<b>Who will ESV work with?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ISO, IEC and AUS/NZ standards committees.</li><li>• Major electricity companies and specified operators.</li><li>• WorkSafe, Fire Rescue Victoria, Country Fire Authority.</li><li>• Solar Victoria, Clean Energy Council.</li><li>• Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).</li><li>• The Victorian community.</li></ul>