

Vegetation Management ESV meeting materials

September 2023



We continue to invest heavily in our programs

**Third helicopter
for LiDAR
operations** **\$6m**

- Our third helicopter, a Bell 407, has been operational since July 2023. This will see our full network inspection results received sooner each year (forecast 31 July in 2024)
- The third helicopter will provide continuity through unplanned and planned maintenance

**Dedicated hourly
rate crews** **\$15m**

- Through 2023, we have utilised dedicated hourly rate crews with heavy machinery and mechanical equipment to tackle the most challenging and high risk areas on networks (principally Gisborne/Woodend, north of Ballarat and the Otways)
- These crews have removed huge volumes of vegetation and reduced risk long term – see examples overleaf

**Increased
contractor span
rates** **\$4m**

- To ensure our contractors can maintain and sustainably grow their resource volumes we have increased HBRA span rates by an average of 33%. This is over and above any contracted requirement and demonstrates our commitment to getting the right volume of resource on our networks

**Additional
contractor –
Locale Civil** **\$5m**

- Locale Civil, a new contractor, will commence in October 2023
- Locale is 50% owned by Beon Energy Solutions – CitiPower/Powercor's unregulated business
- Based in Kyneton with two mechanical units and 4 large EWPs, this contractor will be focused on the most challenging and difficult to resource spans in the region

Our vegetation management program is systematically reducing risk quickly and safely



Inspection program

- 97.0% (277k spans) of Powercor HBRA inspections results have been received as at 6 September
- 99.8% (17.5k spans) of UE HBRA inspection results have been received as at 6 September
- Our internally delivered LiDAR flight operations and data processing is seeing accurate results received earlier each year. In 2024, we are forecasting to have all HBRA results received by 31 July
- In 2023, we are completing additional pre-summer assurance LiDAR inspections of all 66kV spans (HBRA and rural LBRA) and all spans in Bushfire Construction Areas. These flights have been completed with inspection results due by 15 September



VP1 and VP2 coded spans

- We will go into the 2023/24 fire season with a greater than 65% reduction in our outstanding HBRA VP1/2 coded spans
- In Powercor HBRA, as at 6 September we are currently 53% less than the same time in 2022. In UE HBRA, our current volume is above the same time in 2022, however increased resourcing through September – November will quickly reduce our outstanding volume



Hazard tree cutting

- To 6 September 2023 we have cut 1,360 hazard trees in our HBRA regions (Powercor: 1,110 and UE: 250)
- We have already surpassed our previous highest full year total of 1,194, achieved in 2022



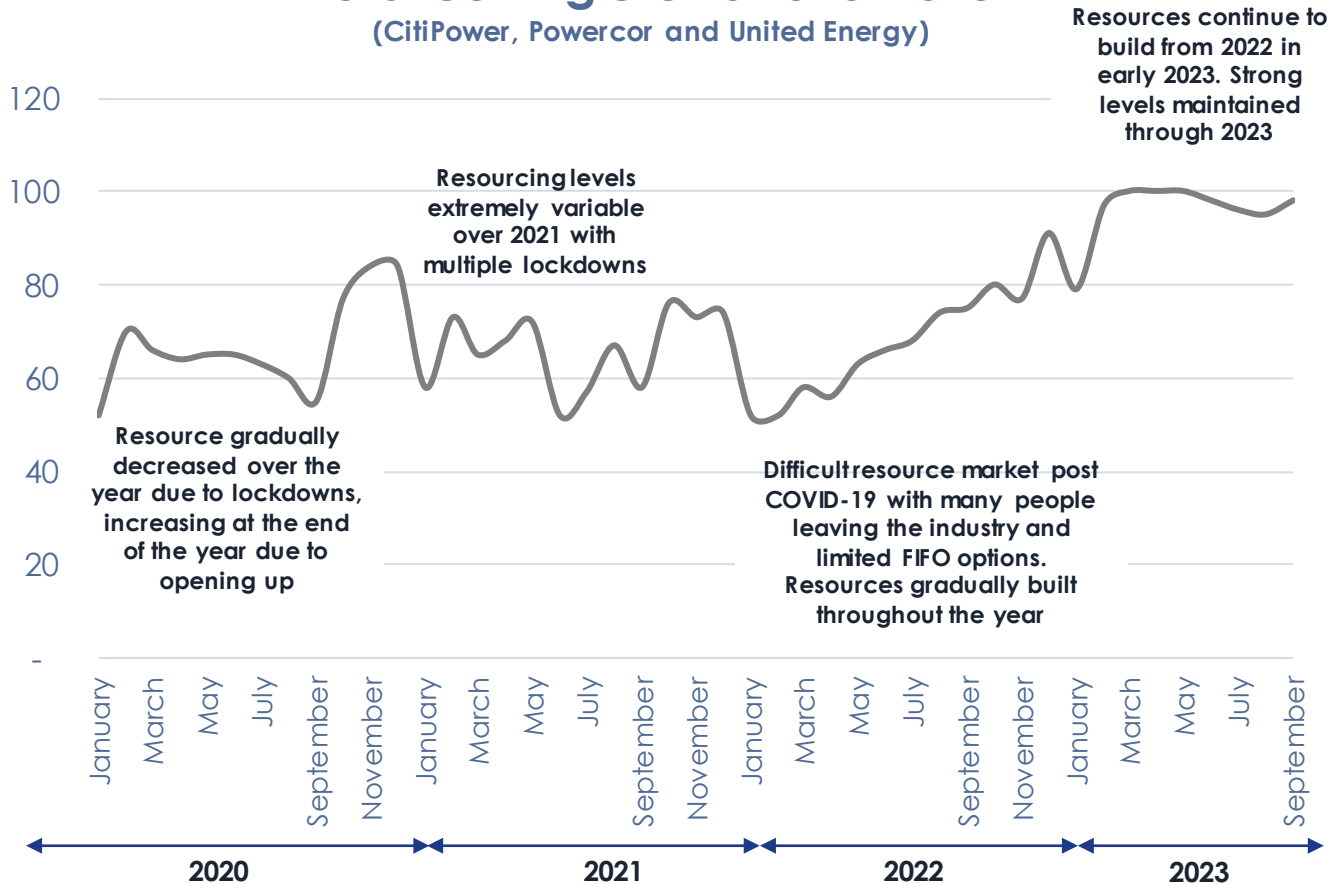
Mechanical cutting

- Mechanical cutting resource has tripled from 2021 levels to an average of 19 units each week
- Asplundh, our primary contractor, has ordered an additional five mechanical units from the US which will be operational in the first half of 2024
- Mechanical units can cut heavy and challenging vegetation more quickly and safely – creating bigger clearances in our highest risk areas

Resourcing underpins our program – 2023 levels are the highest we have achieved

Total cutting crews 2020-2023

(CitiPower, Powercor and United Energy)



- Maintaining consistent and appropriate levels of vegetation cutting resource has been challenging across the last three years, key drivers:
 - COVID-19 restrictions
 - Reduction in FIFO availability
 - General exit of people from the industry
- Productivity was also impacted by record 2022 rainfall and widespread flooding
- We have steadily built resource from a low in early 2022
- Current levels are now at a record high across the last three years, but we continue to push our contractors to grow their base and consistency
- Asplundh, our primary contractor, now has 52% internal crews, up from 20% same time in 2022

Recent cutting on Powercor network – Woodend

Full removal of row of pines to eliminate risk long term across two spans



Before



After



Recent cutting on Powercor network – Macedon

Post compliance and hazard tree cutting



Before



After

Recent cutting on Powercor network – Gisborne

Huge volume of vegetation removed across challenging terrain



Before



After