



The Hon Chris Hartcher MP

Minister for Resources and Energy

Special Minister of State

Minister for the Central Coast

MEDIA RELEASE

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GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES NON-FRONTLINE STAFF RECRUITMENT FREEZE

NSW Minister for Resources and Energy, Chris Hartcher today announced a recruitment freeze on all non-frontline staff of NSW electricity network companies effective immediately.

The freeze – to apply to Ausgrid, Endeavour Energy and Essential Energy - forms part of the NSW Government's strategy to help contain the spiral in power prices, with network spending identified as one of the main drivers of price increases.

“The Coalition Government has made clear our concerns about the impact of rising electricity prices on households,” Mr Hartcher said.

“We are committed to doing everything we can to prevent such massive increases in the future.

“In order to help contain network costs, the electricity network companies must now recruit internally for vacant administration and corporate positions wherever possible.”

The recruitment freeze will not apply to the specialised and skilled frontline workers who maintain, repair and upgrade the network.

The freeze will see existing staff fill vacant positions rather than conduct external advertising and recruitment.

Mr Hartcher said the recruitment freeze would not apply to the apprenticeship recruitment programs of power companies.

“This will ensure the next generation of line workers, technicians and operators receive the necessary training and experience so networks can continue to deliver reliable supply to households, businesses and industry.”

The recruitment freeze is a preliminary step in the process of implementing the Government's election commitment to merge the three electricity distributors into two.

The Government last month unveiled a three point plan to try to ease the impact of proposed power price rises announced by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

“The Government has already approved the introduction of rebates of up to \$250 for low income earners to be phased in from July 1.

“We have also announced a review of the electricity network licence conditions to halt any over-spending which may be forcing up power prices.

“In addition, we will be seeking compensation from the Federal Government to offset the price rises caused by the Commonwealth’s Renewable Energy Target,” Mr Hartcher said.

The Government will also require Boards to report on employment numbers and costs as part of their quarterly reporting to the Shareholding Ministers.

“By identifying measures that don’t directly impact upon service delivery, including this recruitment freeze, we are looking to contain any network costs that end up being paid by customers,” Mr Hartcher said.