

Final determination to revoke the South Australian protected event

The Reliability Panel has determined to revoke the South Australian destructive winds protected event

The Reliability Panel is satisfied that the South Australian protected event declaration is no longer required as AEMO can use the revised contingency reclassification framework to manage the risks associated with destructive winds in South Australia.

The Panel considers that revoking the South Australian protected event would promote the long-term interests of consumers by avoiding excessive costs as the power system transforms while simultaneously supporting the secure operation of the power system. The South Australian protected event will be revoked from **30 March 2024**, prior to the planned energisation of Project EnergyConnect Stage 1 in April 2024.

The Panel's final determination

The Panel has determined to revoke the South Australia protected event as the risk of destructive winds in South Australia can be better managed using the revised contingency reclassification framework. This will allow AEMO to apply revised operational controls that reflect network changes due to the connection of Project EnergyConnect Stage 1.

The **South Australian 'destructive winds' protected event** was declared by the [Reliability Panel in 2019](#). It allows AEMO to manage the heightened risk to the South Australian power system due to destructive winds, such as those that led to the state-wide "System Black" event that occurred in South Australia on 28 September 2016.

Project EnergyConnect is a new 330kV AC Interconnector between Robertstown in South Australia and Wagga Wagga in New South Wales. Stage 1 is expected to be energised in April 2024 and will provide a single-circuit connection with a transfer capacity of 150 MW. Stage 2 will upgrade Project EnergyConnect to a double circuit connection with a transfer capacity of 800 MW and is expected to be completed in December 2024.

The revocation of the South Australian protected event will take effect on **30 March 2024**, before the expected synchronisation of Project EnergyConnect Stage 1 in April 2024. This date is different to the date in the draft determination and AEMO's original request, which was 1 October 2023. However, the Panel considers that the revised date is appropriate due to the later expected date for commencement of Project EnergyConnect Stage 1.

The final determination includes the Panel's reasons for revoking the protected event and:

- recommends that AEMO publish updated interconnector flow limits through its *Interconnector capabilities* document
- expresses support for AEMO's planned review of the protected event framework.

The Panel expects that AEMO will publish updated flow limits for interconnectors

The Panel expects that AEMO will provide market participants with transparency on flow limits that will apply on the Heywood Interconnector and Project EnergyConnect, before and after the connection of Project EnergyConnect Stage 1. The Panel recommends that this could be achieved by AEMO expanding on its *Interconnector capabilities* document to include the flow limits that would apply in the event of a known priority risk, as identified in the [General Power System Risk Review](#). This would include the flow limits that AEMO intends to apply for the Heywood Interconnector and Project EnergyConnect during

destructive winds in South Australia, providing similar transparency to market participants as the protected event framework while allowing AEMO to adjust flow limits as required.

The Panel supports a review of the protected event framework

In light of proposals from AEMO and CS Energy, the Panel supports the proposed review of the protected event framework and the potential submission of a rule change proposal for reforms to the protected event framework, if identified as necessary and beneficial.

The Panel notes that CS Energy's submission to the draft determination argued that the protected event framework is not fit for purpose and that the revocation of the South Australian protected event (which is the only protected event to date) presents a timely opportunity to review the effectiveness of the protected event framework. The Panel also notes that, in the 2023 *General Power System Risk Review*, AEMO committed to undertake a review of the protected event framework by Q4 2023 and to consider the submission of a rule change proposal to enhance the protected event framework.

The Panel followed the expedited rules consultation procedure

On 11 April 2023, the Panel received a request from AEMO to revoke the South Australian protected event. AEMO considered that the protected event should be revoked before the connection of Project EnergyConnect Stage 1, as the existing arrangements will not be fit for purpose due to changes in network topology. AEMO determined there will be no negative consequences from revoking the protected event, as the risk of destructive winds can be managed using the revised contingency reclassification framework.

The Panel has followed the expedited rules consultation procedure to assess AEMO's request to revoke the protected event, as the Panel considers that AEMO's request is a non-material proposal. The Panel is satisfied that AEMO can appropriately manage risks associated with the protected event without having a significant effect on the NEM or on the activities of registered participants. In accordance with clause 8.9.3(b) of the NER, the Panel invited any person to submit a written objection to the use of the expedited rules consultation procedure by 20 July 2023. The Panel did not receive any such objections.

The expedited rules consultation procedure has only one round of consultation prior to the final determination. The Panel received one submission (from CS Energy) in response to the draft determination, which supported the revocation of the protected event.

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The revocation of the South Australian protected event will take effect on 30 March 2024.