

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Suburban Development



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

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NEW TECHNOLOGY POINTS TO BUSHFIRE SAFETY BREAKTHROUGH

A project funded by the Andrews Labor Government to help stop powerlines from sparking bushfires has had an early breakthrough.

Minister for Energy Lily D'Ambrosio approved a \$650,000 grant to Melbourne-based technology company IND Technology to fund its Early Fault Detection system (EFD) on the Victorian Electricity Network.

One year into the two-year research trial, results have indicated the EFD has the ability to discover faults that are difficult to detect by current protective systems.

On 28 May, 2018, the EFD system identified a fault on the network at Ross Creek where there was a broken strand on the line. This hard-to-find fault is the exact type of failure that sparked the Kilmore East fire during the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires.

The trial has placed 61 EFD devices on two separate 80-kilometre Single Wire Earth Return (SWER) networks in western and north-eastern Victoria.

With almost 30,000 kilometres of SWER electrical lines across Victoria, this technology presents a ground-breaking solution to the challenge of reducing the risk of bushfires from powerlines.

Research trials will continue to monitor and investigate faults picked up by the EFD system to gather evidence-based data to assess whether the EFD system device can be brought to market.

The trial is part of the Labor Government's \$750 million Powerline Bushfire Safety Program delivering safer communities from bushfires.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"We know the devastating impact of bushfires in Victoria – if these positive results continue, this technology could be lifesaving."

"We're investing in projects like these to keep Victorians safe and to reduce the risk of powerlines causing bushfires."