



## Media release

20 March 2008

### **FARMERS AND TRUCK DRIVERS URGED TO ALWAYS “LOOK UP AND LIVE”**

Local electricity distribution business Powercor has once again joined forces with the State's electricity safety regulator, Energy Safe Victoria, to help prevent deaths resulting from trucks hitting powerlines during the forthcoming season when bulk deliveries are made to farms.

In an incident earlier this year, a young man received a serious electric shock and burn injuries when a powerline fell onto the roof of an earth mover. The victim was lucky to be alive after the excavator rolled back and hit a power pole resulting in a 22,000 volt conductor falling onto the machine.”

In 2006, two truck drivers and a farmer were electrocuted when vehicles touched powerlines on farms in Victoria.

“All deaths are tragic, but they are even more tragic when they could have so easily been avoided. People have been taking the presence of powerlines for granted or simply ignoring them and the consequences are proving to be fatal,” said Powercor Regional Asset Manager Ian Gillingham.

“Everyone involved must realise that while trucks are getting bigger - powerlines are staying at the same height.

“We do not want any more deaths or injuries resulting from trucks hitting powerlines. With common sense and greater care, such incidents can be prevented. Victoria's comprehensive ‘No Go Zone’ rules and regulations must be observed at all times,” Mr Gillingham said.

Director of Energy Safety, Mr Ken Gardner, said that everyone involved in the delivery of materials to farms must exercise the appropriate duty of care.

“Farmers and truck drivers need to always ‘Look Up And Live’. But farmers have the added responsibility of ensuring that the drop off point for deliveries is located well clear of powerlines. Similarly if truck drivers have concerns they should refuse to make the deliveries.

“If as a very last resort there is no alternative but to deliver materials near powerlines, then everybody involved has to be fully aware of the precautions required.

“Responsibility for safety must be extended beyond the farm yard. When taking orders, suppliers of farm materials should ascertain the delivery point on the farm for the load, the proximity of powerlines and what safety precautions are in place should there be powerlines in the vicinity.

“Unfortunately, experience shows that everyone – particularly truck drivers, property owners and farm workers - involved in the delivery of lime, fertiliser and other bulk material to farms is at risk from electrocution because of trucks touching powerlines,” said Mr Gardner.

Powercor and Energy Safe Victoria have introduced a number of initiatives to stress the “Look Up And Live” message to farmers and drivers.

A television commercial directly targeting truck drivers and farmers will be screened throughout regional Victoria over coming weeks. Radio commercials from ESV and Powercor will also be aired.

“Look Up And Live” brochures, stickers and posters are being distributed throughout the State. The overriding message of the brochure is: “Be Alert, Be Aware – Overhead Powerlines Are Always There.” One of the stickers, which can be placed on the inside of windscreens, details the safe working distances which must be observed between trucks, machinery and power poles.

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**Further information:**

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