



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

Come for the beauty, Stay for the lifestyle

Electric Line Clearance Management Plan 2022/23

Version 4.3: July 2022

Authorisation and Endorsement

The South Gippsland Shire Council is the custodian of this Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (ELCMP).

This ELCMP has been produced to align with the relevant clauses of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

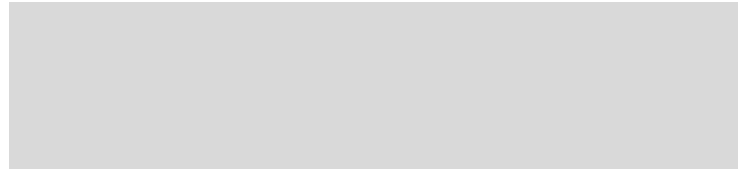
The corresponding sections of the Plan are numbered identically to the section of the Regulations to enable cross referencing.

Authorised by:

Name: Anthony Seabrook

Position: Director Sustainable Infrastructure

Signature:



Version Control

Version	Date	Brief Description of Changes	Doc Ref No.
1.0	30-Jan-2020	2020/21 document creation	N/A
2.0	20-Feb-2020	Change of Chief Executive Officer	N/A
3.0	1-Dec-2020	Updated based on advice from Energy Safe Victoria (D11138920)	D474421
4.0	18-Jan-2021	Document formatted (Master file – Word)	D473821
4.1	22-Jan-2021	LBRA & HBRA Maps for Leongatha & Korumburra updated.	D473821
4.2	20-Aug-2021	Section (9)(3)(q) dispute resolution procedures updated to Manager Open Space & Environment	D1509019
4.3	1-Jul-2022	Front page, headers, and footers updated with revised date. Appendix 2 removed (map Warragul & Drouin)	D10895822

South Gippsland Shire Council has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within this Plan.

Any inaccuracies or omissions should be notified to:

Coordinator Parks and Gardens

South Gippsland Shire Council

Phone: 03 5662 9200

Email: council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au

Postal Address: Private Bag 4, Leongatha, VIC, 3953

Distribution Businesses

The name and contact details for the Service Distribution Businesses that operate within South Gippsland Shire Council's Municipality are:

Organisation Name:	AusNet Services
Contact name:	Spencer Few
Position:	Stakeholder, HSE & Audit Lead Vegetation and Easement Management
Address:	Beaconsfield Ave, Beaconsfield 3807
Contact Number:	0439 563 262
Head Office:	Level 31, 2 Southbank Boulevard Southbank VIC 3006
Contact No:	13 17 99

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PART 2 | SECTION 9 – PREPARATION OF MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following sections are as per Section 9 of the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

Section 9(2) Before 31 March in each year, a responsible person must ensure that a management plan relating to compliance with the Code for the next financial year is prepared;

Before the 31 of March each year, the responsible person at the South Gippsland Shire Council (SGSC) will ensure that the current management plan will be re submitted in compliance with the Code of Practice for the next financial year.

As part of the preparation, key employees from Council's Infrastructure Maintenance Department will meet eight weeks prior to said date and review, amend internally, and authorise the document prior to the 31 March deadline each year. This review includes ensuring all relevant standards, policies and documents are current.

The responsible officer will submit via e-mail the completed plan to Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) within 14 days of request.

The responsibility for this process to be implemented lies with Council's Coordinator Parks and Gardens.

Section 9(3)(a) the name, address and telephone number of the responsible person;

Name:	South Gippsland Shire Council
Address:	9 Smith Street, Leongatha 3953
Telephone Number:	03 5662 9200
Facsimile Number:	5662 3754
Chief Executive Officer:	Kerryn Ellis

Section 9(3)(b) the name, position, address and telephone number of the individual who was responsible for the preparation of the management plan;

Name:	Steve Missen
Position:	Coordinator Parks and Gardens
Business Address:	9 Smith Street, Leongatha 3953
Telephone No:	0428 629 104
Facsimile No:	03 5662 3754

Email Address stevenm@southgippsland.vic.gov.au

Section 9(3)(c) the name, position, address and telephone number of the persons who are responsible for carrying out the management plan;

Name: Steve Missen
Position: Coordinator Parks and Gardens
Business Address: 9 Smith Street, Leongatha 3953
Telephone No: 0428 629 104
Facsimile No: 03 5662 3754
Email Address stevenm@southgippsland.vic.gov.au

Section 9(3)(d) the telephone number of a person who can be contacted in an emergency that requires clearance of a tree from an electric line that the responsible person is required to keep clear of trees;

Name: Steve Missen
Emergency No: 0428 629 104

Section 9(3)(e) the objectives of the management plan;

The following are identified as the key objectives as stated and the duties set out in the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

Key objectives of the plan for 2022 to 2023:

- South Gippsland Shire Council is committed to electrical safety;
- Ensure electrical safety to the public and property;
- Compliance with the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020;
- Protect areas of important vegetation such as botanically, historically or culturally important or significant vegetation;
- Manage vegetation to maximise the amenity value of SGSC trees;
- Provision of a safe working place for employees, contractors and residents;
- Minimise the danger of electrocution and electrical lines causing fires;
- Maintain continuity of the power supply;
- Endeavour to provide the community with satisfaction of executing the necessary vegetation works required throughout the municipality; and

- Annually review and submit the ELCMP.

Section 9(3)(f) the land to which the management plan applies (as indicated on a map);

The South Gippsland Shire Council plan only covers trees on land that is managed by South Gippsland Shire Council in the Declared Areas of Leongatha and Korumburra.

The trees are located within road reserves, parklands, and other land/property managed by SGSC. Town maps are attached in **Appendix 1**. This includes the towns of Leongatha and Korumburra.

SGSC manages an unknown quantity of street trees within its urban areas and SGSC estimate 4,000 trees are planted below electric lines in Council's Declared Areas.

SGSC is currently implementing its Tree management Plan this in time will provide tree quantities.

Low Bushfire Risk Areas (LBRA) and High Bushfire Risk Areas (HBRA) refer to fire risk mapping maintained by the CFA which is reviewed annually with the CFA and Council's Emergency Management Department to discuss the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). This information forms part of the annual review of the Municipal Fire Management planning process. Town maps are attached in **Appendix 2**.

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) is available on Council's website under *Council Strategies and Plans* or alternatively you can request a copy by emailing council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au.

Section 9(3)(g) each area that the responsible person knows contains a tree that the responsible person may need to cut or remove to ensure compliance with the Code and that is—

- (i) *native; or*

For the purposes of this Plan, native vegetation is considered to be a tree species locally indigenous to the area and does not include commercial and ornamental Australian native species, which are commonly planted as street trees.

Council's Declared Area consists of mixed local native species, commercial native varieties and introduced species. Areas of historical, cultural, environmental, ecological and aesthetical importance have been identified throughout the municipality and included as Heritage and Environmental Significance Overlays in Council's Planning Scheme.

There are no known trees of habitat significance for rare or endangered species listed in Council's Declared Areas within the vicinity of electric lines that require pruning or clearing to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice.

As there has been a long-term and ongoing electric line clearance process around existing native trees, there are no known native trees that will be adversely affected by future works.

In alignment with the annual review of SGSC, s ELCMP, Council will review the mentioned

resources as stated in Section 9(3)(h) to ensure awareness of any new introductions of significant native flora and fauna listings.

Council will liaise with the relevant Distribution Company (AusNet Services) and request to obtain spatial data of the electrical line assets in the Declared Area to incorporate in its Geographic Information System (GIS) to facilitate better planning and identification of affected trees and significant vegetation.

In February each year, as part of the annual review of this Plan, if there are any declared area adjustments that differ from the previous year, this will trigger an analysis of native vegetation that may be impacted.

Council's Environmental Planning team will brief the person responsible for the preparation of the Plan on changes to native vegetation mapping, controls and other relevant matters. The amended Plan will be submitted as per Section 9(2). The result of the plan adjustments will be raised with the relevant Contractors involved with undertaking electric line clearance works.

- (ii) *listed in a planning scheme to be of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance; or*

Based on the historical annual electric line clearance process, trees of significance have been identified in the declared area that will be affected by electric line clearance.

No Environmental Significance Overlay's apply to native trees within SGSC.

SGSC has compiled a document containing a list of trees Council considers significant within the municipality. The South Gippsland Significant Tree Register is a collection of trees that fit within one or more of the following criteria at a significant level, with the criteria covering historical, cultural, botanical, ecological, rare, and endangered and/or remnant indigenous vegetation. The list includes individual trees and groups of trees none of which are affected by line clearance.

Currently there are trees that fall under this Regulation in the Code of Practice which need pruning or removing.

SGSC's overlays do not require a permit under these overlays for works to maintain vegetation clear of an electric line in accordance with the Code of Practice.

By their nature, this type of vegetation does not change quickly in normal circumstances. Council will review the resources listed in Sections 9(3)(g)(i)–9(3)(g)(ii) on an annual basis when this Plan is revised as described in Section 9(2).

- (iii) *a tree of cultural or environmental significance;*

Trees of Cultural or Environmental Significance for the purposes of the Plan are defined as any tree protected as Significant or Heritage by relevant State legislation or local planning controls. Based on the historical annual electric line clearance process, there are no identified areas of special or cultural vegetation identified in the declared area that will be affected by electric line clearance works.

SGSC's Significant Tree Register is formed and complies with the National Trust. The list

includes individual trees and groups of trees none of which that are affected by Electric line clearance. By their nature, this type of vegetation does not change quickly in normal circumstances. Council will review the resources listed in Sections 9(3)(g)(i)–9(3)(g)(ii) on an annual basis when this Plan is revised as described in Section 9(2).

Section 9(3)(h) the means which the responsible person is required to use to identify a tree of a kind specified in paragraph (g)(i), (ii) or (iii);

Currently there are no street trees or parkland trees of threatened flora, threatened invertebrate fauna, threatened vertebrate fauna, cultural or environmental significance, Heritage Act 2017, Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, or Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 that fall under this Management Plan. There are street trees or parkland trees within heritage precincts, trees are still pruned to the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

Additional resources available to identify significant native trees are:

- Reference to the Heritage Register as per the meaning of the Heritage Act 2017
[http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/;](http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/)
- Reference to the National Trust Register
[http://trusttrees.org.au/;](http://trusttrees.org.au/)
- Reference to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register as established under Division 3 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
[https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/victorianaboriginal-heritage-register;](https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/victorianaboriginal-heritage-register)
- Reference to flora or habitat of fauna listed as threatened in accordance with Section 10 of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
[http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/environment-and-wildlife/biodiversity/biodiversity-interactive-map;](http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/environment-and-wildlife/biodiversity/biodiversity-interactive-map)
- Reference to the Threatened Flora List as published by the relevant State department
[https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/conserving-threatened-species/threatened-species-advisory-lists;](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/conserving-threatened-species/threatened-species-advisory-lists) and
- Reference to the Threatened Invertebrate and Vertebrate Lists and associated habitat as published by the relevant State department
[https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/conserving-threatened-species/threatened-species-advisory-lists.](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/conserving-threatened-species/threatened-species-advisory-lists)

If trees are identified in the future as being of significance they will be defined by the above categories or Acts, the tree/s will be added to the South Gippsland Shire Councils Significant Tree Register.

If pruning works are required to be carried out on any of the above categories or Acts, SGSC will conduct works as far as practicable with the pruning of any native trees/vegetation while adhering to above categories and/or Acts. SGSC will as far as practicable look at ways to reduce pruning cycles to reduce the regrowth rates on these trees.

If any of these trees need to be pruned and/or removed, SGSC will notify affected residents and/or any related community groups. SGSC will give notice of pruning workings with a minimum of 14 days before the intended pruning and/or tree removal works are carried out.

In alignment with the annual review of SGSC's ELCMP, Council will review the above-mentioned resources to ensure awareness of any new introductions of significant native flora and fauna listings.

In preparation of any tree works conducted of this nature the relevant contractor / Council employees initiated to undertake the task, will be briefed via a pre-commencement meeting prior to undertaking tree works.

Section 9(3)(i) the management procedures that the responsible person is required to adopt to ensure compliance with the Code;

Managing trees

SGSC manages approximately 4,000 trees under electrical lines and carries out pruning or clearing of trees under electric lines as part of a contract (currently SGSC15-07), pruning all streets within the Declared Areas. The pruning works are done so that the streets within the Declared Areas are given highest priority.

The following schedule is consistent with Contract SGSC15-07 and complies with the Code of Practice:

- Zone 1 and Zone 2 Declared Areas. (Town maps in **Appendix 2**).

The Contractor(s) will complete the two zones annually within the current contract. All vegetation within the designated zones for each financial year is expected to meet Regulations prior to 1 April of that year as per Contract SGSC15-07.

Schedule of Works	Timeline
Advertisement Public Notice	November
Pre-commencement Meeting	December
Pruning Works Conducted	January – April
HBRA and Regrowth Audit	November

In regards to regrowth pruning undertaken outside the Schedule of Works listed above; i.e. where individual trees are assessed as being likely to grow into the required clearance zone before the next planned annual pruning cycle.

The priorities and estimated interval of these regrowth pruning works (if required) are based on the species, size, and growth rate of trees and the location of the tree and electric lines.

Identified tree species that may require regrowth pruning maintenance include:

- Fraxinus species;

- Liquidambar styraciflua;
- Platanus species;
- Lephostemon confertus; and
- Quercus palustris.

Pruning cycles are determined by Council's Coordinator Parks and Gardens from previous experience and from observing the rate of growth of species under the prevailing growing conditions at various locations. The above pruning cycles can vary due to unseasonable weather conditions: for example, higher rainfall, warmer weather and longer growing seasons.

Section 9(3)(i) – (i) include details of the methods to be adopted for managing trees and maintaining a minimum clearance space as required by the Code;

SGSC's Declared Area Maps for Leongatha and Korumburra identify areas where electric line clearance works are required. SGSC's specification for the management and maintenance of street trees always require specified clearance spaces to be maintained in these areas. All clearance tree pruning is completed in accordance with AS4373-2007 Pruning of amenity trees (AS4373).

The Coordinator Parks and Gardens with support from AusNet services undertakes visual inspections of the entire Low Bushfire Rated Areas (LBRA) following pruning works. The inspections identify any trees, which are in breach of the Regulations, and also any trees which may breach the Regulations within the following six months. An assessment is made in regard to regrowth pruning as per the sequence listed in Section 9(3)(i).

The Coordinator Parks and Gardens undertakes annual visual inspections with support from AusNet services of the entire High Bushfire Rated Areas HBRA situated within the Declared Areas prior to the Declared Fire Danger Period. To ensure works are completed, a reminder will be placed within the responsible persons Microsoft Outlook calendar schedule and is also a Key Performance Indicator in Council's Quarterly Performance Management Reporting System (Interplan/CAMMS).

Tree maintenance works identified by these inspections are incorporated in reactive tree maintenance programs. The works are classified as critical or non-compliance. Critical signifies any tree that is growing through or touching high voltage lines. Non-compliance indicates trees that are within clearance zones on low voltage lines, whether touching or not. Remedial pruning works are carried out within the following time frames:

- Critical works will be carried out within five working days; and
- Non-compliance works will be carried out within four weeks.

In the event an approved contractor is not available to complete works within specified timeframe Councils in – house team will undertake works.

Each inspection will be documented and recorded. The non-conformities and the date that the critical or non-compliance works have been carried out will be recorded.

SGSC currently has several alternate methods to achieve code compliance between electric lines and vegetation, while also reducing the adverse effect of the presence of those electric lines on vegetation. SGSC, in conjunction with AusNet Services will consider a range of techniques, including, but not limited to, aerial bundling of cables, undergrounding of power, pruning to provide long term electric line clearance or the planting of appropriate species of tree for new and replacement plantings.

All tree planting programs undertaken by SGSC will recognise the inherent problems with the planting of vegetation in the vicinity of power lines. Where overhead services are present, tree selection will generally be made from SGSC's Tree Management Plan, which will eliminate or minimise the amount of pruning required to maintain clearance Regulations in future years.

SGSC is progressively removing trees under electric lines and have a tree removal program which targets poorly performed trees and/or inappropriate trees. These trees are being replaced with a more appropriate species, from SGSCs Tree management Plan list of species.

SGSC's long-term strategy is to reduce vegetation encroaching into the clearance space on all electric lines. SGSC aims to achieve this by removing unsuitable street trees, replacing them with species whose mature height doesn't grow within the clearance zones and/or have slower growth rates.

Section 9(3)(ii) specify the method for determining an additional distance that allows for cable sag and sway for the purposes of determining a minimum clearance space in accordance with Division 1 of Part 3 of the Code;

The applicable clearance distances as outlined in the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 – Schedule 2 – Applicable distance for middle two thirds of a span of an electric line graphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 are for spans less than 100m in LBRA, and graphs 5 and 6 are for spans less than 45m in HBRA as these include allowance for sag and sway (see **Appendix 3**).

For spans greater than 100m in LBRA and greater than 45m in HBRA within South Gippsland Shires Councils Declared Areas, Council will contact AusNet Services who are required to provide the minimum clearance (including the additional allowance for sag and sway) for that span. This information is maintained within Council's Information Management system for a minimum of seven years and is provided to the relevant Electric Line Clearance personnel at the pre-commencement meeting.

Section 9(3)(j) the procedures to be adopted if it is not practicable to comply with the requirements of AS4373 while cutting a tree in accordance with the Code;

Compliance with AS4373 requires observation of several factors when undertaking pruning. These factors include:

- Formative pruning of young trees – this is seen to be a critical requirement for trees under electric lines to develop canopy shapes that can be managed for compliance when the trees mature;

- The amount and distribution of canopy removed – this is dictated by the Compliance requirements. The amount of canopy removed shall be the least amount required to achieve and maintain compliance, or to manage the tree in line with Section 9(3)(i) of this Plan and the canopy will be shaped to create a weight and canopy distribution as close to normal as possible;
- The size of the limb to which the pruning cut is made; and
- The angle of the final pruning cut.

As a result of the need to achieve minimum clearance distances, as well as access restrictions inherent in maintaining safe approach distances, a safe work environment when working at heights and achieving an affordable level of productivity, it is acknowledged that compliance with AS4373, especially in relation to the final pruning cut, cannot always be achieved. Council requires that compliance with AS4373 be achieved whenever reasonably practicable in light of these limitations in terms of pruning techniques and pruning cuts.

In order to achieve pruning of acceptable quality, all pruning personnel, either Council employees or Contractors, must have the following as a minimum:

- Formal training as outlined in Section 9(o) that incorporates modern tree pruning practices including awareness of AS4373 and natural target pruning principles; and
- Project induction including awareness training in the Code of Practice and this Management Plan.

As part of Council's normal contract management processes, pruning quality will be assessed by the Parks and Gardens Coordinator poor performance will be identified based according to the standards in Section 9(3)(n). Normal contract management processes will be used to address poor performance, including contract meetings, increased compliance audits, remedial training and, where necessary, application of contract non-conformance penalties.

Under Contract SGSC15-07, all works must meet the specifications. One requirement within the specifications is if the maintenance of a tree cannot meet AS4373, the Contractor is required to flag the tree for a follow up inspection from the Coordinator Parks and Gardens to follow up and action. Another requirement within the contract specifications is that only appropriate equipment is used to undertake the requested tree maintenance. These requirements are also reiterated during the Contractor's commencement of works meeting prior to beginning works.

Section 9(3)(k) a description of each alternative compliance mechanism in respect of which the responsible person has applied, or proposes to apply, for approval under clause 31 of the Code;

SGSC does not intend to apply for any alternative compliance mechanisms at the time of the preparation of this plan.

Section 9(3)(l) the details of each approval for an alternative compliance mechanism that – (i) the responsible person holds; and (ii) is in effect;

Not Applicable.

Section 9(3)(m) a description of the measures that must be used to assess the performance of the responsible person under the management plan;

Council assesses and monitors the performance of the responsible person under Contract SGSC15-07 and the contractors must provide the following:

- Contractors must provide cut sheets for all inspection and pruning completed per zone;
- Contractors must prune to code any area of noncompliance as outlined in Contract SGSC15-07 and the contractor is required to return to outlined area of noncompliance and complete rework to meet compliance as soon as practicable;
- All distribution business requests for pruning is carried out by the contractor at the earliest possible opportunity and distribution business is notified when completed; and
- After Electric Line Clearance Inspection Audits are carried out, Council will notify the contractor of any noncompliant pruning as required in AS4373 and penalties apply as required in Contract SGSC15-07.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) SGSC follow in reference to the plan:

Criteria	Measurement Method	KPI
Completion of the inspection/pruning programs according to the schedule.	Audit inspections and works ensuring timelines are met.	100% completion prior to 1 April each year.
A reduction in the code clearance breaches identified through the inspection program.	Audit external breaches from the Distribution Business (DB) and Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) breaches.	Zero breaches of the Code of Practice Clearances.
Compliance of the current ELCMP.	The Plan is submitted to ESV within 14 days of request.	The ELCMP uploaded to Council's website prior to 31 March each year.
Providing a safe working place for employees, Contractors and residents. Ensuring safety to the public and property.	Monitor reports of incidents	A reduction in incidents against previous years data.
Compliance regarding Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance Regulations 2020).	Monitor results from audit breaches and the DB audit breaches.	100% compliance.

Criteria	Measurement Method	KPI
Protect areas of important vegetation such as botanically, historically or culturally important or significant vegetation.	Monitor reports of any affected issues in relation to important vegetation.	A reduction in relevant issues against previous years data.
Manage vegetation to maximise the amenity value of South Gippsland Shire Council.	Monitor public complaints regarding tree aesthetics. Monitor 'Customer Request System (Pathways) with electric line clearance related customer requests.	No year-on-year increase of complaints received.
Minimise the danger of electrocution and minimise electric lines causing fires.	Monitor reports of Electric Line Clearance related incidents, including Worksafe cautions and weekly publicised incidents.	Zero electrocutions and/or fires started from BBSC managed vegetation.
Maintain continuity of the power supply	Adhering to SGSC's inspection pruning schedules. 100% completion.	Zero power outages caused by SGSC managed vegetation.
Provide the community with adequate notification of vegetation works required throughout the municipality.	Monitor public complaints regarding tree notification issues.	Proactive works: Annual media releases informing the broader community of the Electric Line Clearance works programmed. Reactive works: letter drop notification of Electric Line Clearance works to affected residents.
Monitoring compliance with Zone Electric Line Clearance.	Auditing Compliance with Code of Practice and Contract 21806	Compliance with clearance code and Contract SGSC15-07
Code Clearance breach	Auditing and reporting penalties as required Contract 21806	No Code Clearance breaches
Distribution Business Requests	Inspecting and referred to contractor for action	Confirmed completion with Distribution Business
Clearance not meeting requirement AS4373	Audit reporting at non-compliant pruning as required Contract SGSC15-07	100% compliance with AS4373.

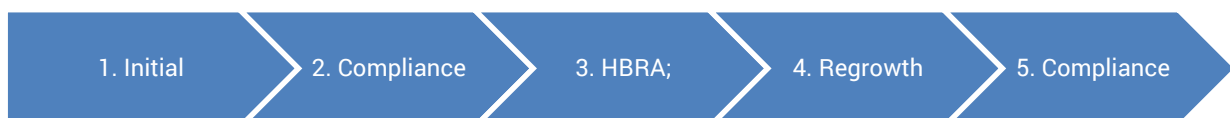
Section 9(3)(n) details of the audit processes that must be used to determine the

responsible person's compliance with the Code;

The audit processes required will be carried out by SGSC employees working on SGSC's Contract SGSC15-07.

During tree maintenance operations, audits are carried out to ensure electric line pruning works are compliant with the Code of Practice. Council's Coordinator Parks and Gardens is required to undertake regular audits. The audit results are then reported to the Contractors.

South Gippsland Shire Council will complete five (5) audits during the annual pruning program, these are:



The audit's criteria include:

- Time;
- Date;
- Location;
- Ensuring compliance with AS4373-2007 Pruning of Amenity Trees;
- Vegetation clearance is to the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020;
- Personnel are adequately qualified and competent;
- Any instances of unacceptable pruning practices;
- Any remedial action to be taken; and
- Traffic Management.

Refer to **Appendix 4** – Electric Line Clearance Inspection Audit Checklist.

Upon completion of Council's Audits, any rectifications identified are referred to the Contractor with payment of completion of works withheld until all works are completed.

Contractors are also required to self-audit their electric line pruning standards to ensure they are compliance with the Code of Practice.

Any remedial action not carried out to the satisfaction of the Coordinator Parks and Gardens will be again reported back to the Contractor for further remedial action.

Council's in-house Tree Maintenance team will carry out any non-compliance remedial works as needed, in the case that the Contractor is in dispute with Council.

The audit maps and number of trees that have and/or will be in breach of the regulation will be recorded. All follow up works will be completed and recorded within the suitable timeframes.

Weekly toolbox meetings are held with SGSC's internal tree maintenance employees and monthly with Contractors. Any issues raised about the inspection cycles and audit process are documented and investigated. If any works are identified during the audit, letters to the affected resident/s will be issued advising of tree pruning works required. This will include time frames and the Coordinator Parks and Gardens' contact details. Refer to example in **Appendix 5**.

SGSC's Parks and Gardens Coordinator also records notes, where required, in their work diary while carrying out inspections. This will note the day, time and reason for remedial action.

SGSC retains records for seven years, these records will show tree and electric line inspections, worksite audits including any work undertaken as a result of requests/complaints from residents and AusNet Services.

Section 9(3)(o) the qualifications and experience that the responsible person must require of the persons who are to carry out the inspection, cutting or removal of trees in accordance with the Code;

Authorised persons on behalf of SGSC, including Council's Tree Maintenance team and Contractors must comply with Electricity Safety (Installations) Regulations 2009; Regulation 318, and Regulation 319 and must comply with the Blue Book 2017 to be considered authorised persons.

All personnel are required to hold applicable licenses in the following areas relating to the equipment and relevant task within their role by an Accredited Training Provider.

- National UET20319 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control including ongoing refreshing training and/or other equivalent approved course's supported by Energy Safe Victoria;
- Licence to operate a boom-type elevating work platform (boom length 11 metres or more) (Travel Tower);
- Hold a current / valid Implement Traffic Management Plans (RIIWHS302E);
- Hold a current / valid Control Traffic with Stop-Slow Bat (RIIWHS205E);
- Minimum qualification of Operate and Maintain Chainsaw - Level 1 (AHCMOM213); and
- Minimum qualification of Provide First Aid (HLTAID003) and Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (HLTAID001).

Team Leader

The auditor appointed to conduct the annual inspection must be a suitably qualified

Arborist. This means they must:

- Hold a minimum qualification of National Certificate Level IV in Horticulture and Arboriculture or hold an equivalent qualification and/or have considerable field experience in assessing tree compliance relating to the Code of Practice;
- Have completed the Assess vegetation and recommend control measures in an ESI environment (UETTDRVC24);
- Have completed training module Identify Trees (AHCARB313);
- Hold a National Certificate II in ESI - Powerline Vegetation Control (JET20319) or other equivalent approved course by Energy Safe Victoria;
- Hold a current Implement Traffic Management Plans (RIIWH302E); and
- Hold a current Control Traffic with Stop-Slow Bat (RIIWH205E).

Coordinator Parks and Gardens

All persons supervising electric line clearance pruning must hold the following:

- Hold a minimum qualification of National Certificate IV in Arboriculture (AHC41916);
- Hold a National Certificate II in ESI - Powerline Vegetation Control (JET20319);
- Hold a current Implement Traffic Management Plans (RIIWH302E); and
- Hold a current Control Traffic with Stop-Slow Bat (RIIWH205E).

Electric Line Clearance team

All persons pruning trees under this plan must have qualifications, experience, received appropriate training and undertaken appropriate assessment(s) to ensure competency in the performance of vegetation management work coupled with the following:

- Have a sound understanding of Occupational Health and Safety;
- Hold a National UET20319 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control or other equivalent approved course by Energy Safe Victoria;
- Have technical knowledge or sufficient experience to perform the duty concerned;
- Have been endorsed in writing by an organisation (e.g. the employer) to perform the work;
- Hold a current Licence to operate a boom-type elevating work platform (boom length 11 metres or more) (Travel Tower);
- Hold a current Implement Traffic Management Plans (RIIWH302E);
- Hold a current Control Traffic with Stop-Slow Bat (RIIWH205E);

- Have undertaken formal training within arboriculture AHC;
- Have three years' experience; and
- All training to be carried out by a registered training organisation.

Ground team

Any persons working on any site conducting or assisting with tree pruning within the vicinity of electric lines must have achieved competencies or completed training courses and hold current qualifications in the following:

- Sound understanding of Occupational Health and Safety;
- Electrical System Identification and Powerline Clearance Distances;
- Training in the Code of Practice on Electrical Safety for the Distribution Business in Victoria Electricity Supply Industry (The Blue Book 2017);
- Hold a minimum qualification of Provide First Aid, including CPR;
- Hold a National UET20319 Certificate II in ESI – Powerline Vegetation Control or other equivalent approved course by Energy Safe Victoria;
- Manual handling techniques;
- Noise conservation techniques;
- Hold a current Implement Traffic Management Plans (RIIWHS302E);
- Hold a current Control Traffic with Stop-Slow Bat (RIIWHS205E);
- Woodchipper competency; and with
- All training to be carried out by a registered training organisation.

In the case of employees and contractors found to have limited or no relevant qualifications they will be required to cease works until qualifications are met, valid and verified.

All licenses, qualifications, and training records of SGSC employees and Contractors are kept maintained by Council's Coordinator Infrastructure Maintenance. These records are kept on Council's record management system.

At the beginning of each financial year, all appropriate Council employees and Contractors engaged by SGSC are to attend a pre-commencement meeting to establish and confirm to employees and Contractors of Council's contract expectations and Occupational Health and Safety requirements of the contract (currently SGSC15-07).

In the case of any doubts regarding the safety of pruning or clearance of vegetation near electric lines, the Coordinator Infrastructure Maintenance must consult AusNet Services to determine:

- The safe limits of approach to the electric lines in question when pruning;
- Safe methods for removing vegetation near the electric lines including the need for power shutdown or suppression; and
- Whether alternatives, such as the replacement of the affected tree with more suitable species, the relocation of the electric lines or alternative methods of construction should be considered where there is an on-going safety problem.

Any Fire Prevention Plan approved by the Emergency Management Committee appointed by SGSC, under the provisions of the Country Fire Authority Act 1958 Division 3 Section 54, must be developed in consideration of the requirements of this Plan. In matters relating to electric lines, the clearances in the Fire Prevention Plan must, as a minimum requirement, conform to the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020.

Section (9)(3)(p) notification and consultation procedures, including the form of the notice to be given in accordance with Division 3 of Part 2 of the Code;

All tree works carried out within SGSC must follow SGSC's Tree Management Policy Plan. These documents are available via email request to council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au.

In the case of trees requiring pruning or removal, SGSC's Coordinator Parks and Gardens will notify affected residents and/or any related community groups. SGSC will give notice of pruning workings with a minimum of 14 days before the intended pruning and/or tree removal works are carried out.

SGSC's Coordinator Parks and Gardens will give notice to the general public through notification in the South Gippsland Shire Council Web page, through letters and notes of all planned electric line pruning maintenance works. The public announcement will occur annually in June as outlined in the table of Schedule of Works in Section 9(3)(i).

Council will notify persons affected by electrical line clearance works at least 14 days and not more than 60 days before the intended pruning or removal is to occur.

An example of the published notification can be found in **Appendix 6**.

Section (9)(3)(q) dispute resolution procedures;

If disputes cannot be resolved at Council level the dispute is to be taken up with the relevant distribution business.

The four-level process of dispute resolution is outlined below:

1. Level 1: The dispute resolution relating to the pruning or removal of trees where it relates to electric line clearance can be addressed to:

Name:	Steve Missen
Position:	Coordinator Parks and Gardens
Business Address:	80 Yarragon Road Leongatha

Telephone No.: 0428 629 104

2. Level 2: Multiple requests or disputes not resolved can be addressed to:

Name: Joel Goodall

Position: Manager Open Space & Environment

Business Address: 80 Yarragon Road, Leongatha

Telephone No: 03 5662 9200

3. Level 3: Disputes not resolved through the level 2 process can be addressed to:

Name: Anthony Seabrook

Position: Director Sustainable Infrastructure

Address: 9 Smith Street, Leongatha

Telephone No.: 03 5662 9200

4. Level 4: External dispute resolution can be addressed to:

Distribution Business: Energy & Water Ombudsman (Victoria Limited)

Business Address: GPO Box 469, MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Phone: 1800 500 509

PART 2 | REGULATION 10 – OBLIGATIONS RELATING TO MANAGEMENT PLAN

Section 10(7) The responsible person must ensure that a copy of the management plan is– (a) published on the responsible person’s Internet site; and

An electronic version of SGSC’s current ELCMP is permanently available to the public and to Energy Safe Victoria on SGSC’s website: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au > *Your Council* > *Council Strategies*.

This document file will be replaced annually in alignment with the Plan review and approval. With the responsible person ensuring that the document file is available and current by 1 July each year.

Section 10(7)(b) available for inspection at the responsible person’s principal office in the State during normal business hours;

A hardcopy of SGSC’s current ELCMP is permanently available to the public and to Energy Safe at Main Reception, 9 Smith Street, Leongatha – Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm (subject to COVID-19 laws and practices). The plan is not to be copied and/or taken away from the site.

This document will be replaced annually in alignment with the ELCMP review and approval. With the responsible person ensuring that the hardcopy is available and is current.

Schedule 1 – Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance

PART 2 | CLEARANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

DIVISION 1 – Roles of Responsible Persons

- (4) **Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around insulated low voltage electric lines**

SGSC does not intend to utilise these exceptions at this time.

- (5) **Exception to minimum clearance space for small branches around insulated low voltage electric lines**

SGSC does not intend to utilise these exceptions at this time.

- (6) **Exception to minimum clearance space for structural branches around uninsulated low voltage electric lines in low bushfire risk areas**

SGSC does not intend to utilise these exceptions at this time.

- (7) **Owner or operator of transmission line must manage trees around minimum clearance space**

Not Applicable.

- (8) **Responsible person may cut or remove hazard tree**

On occasions trees which pose a hazard may be identified throughout tree maintenance operations and this vegetation may not be within the clearance space, however, it can present a risk to compromising an electric line apparatus.

A hazard tree is a tree which “is likely to fail in range or possibly come into contact with, an electric line”. This also includes potential re-growth into clearance space before the next scheduled visit and also vegetation in HBRA found in clearance after declaration.

If the Coordinator Parks and Gardens (as described in Section 9(3)(o)) assess the tree and identify hazards which include health and structure, environmental conditions, stability and regrowth, the tree will be considered for removal.

In making the assessment the Coordinator Parks and Gardens must take into consideration foreseeable local conditions. This should include:

- Significant vegetation;
- Protected flora and fauna;
- Habitat; and
- Weather and environmental conditions.

Subsequently a work plan will be set in place, based on priority level with Council's internal tree maintenance team.

Council will notify all affected persons in relation to the issue.

Records of all urgent works and completion of the notification requirements will be logged electronically under Council's 'Customer Request system' (Pathway) and our asset management system (Conquest).

Information included within this documentation is:

- Date;
- Location; and
- Completed works date.

DIVISION 2 – Manner of Cutting and Removing Trees

(9) Cutting of tree to comply with Standard

See Part 2 Section 9(3)(j).

(10) Cutting or removal of specified trees must be minimised

Native trees

Trees listed in a planning scheme to be of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance.

Trees of cultural or environmental significance must be minimised, please refer to information provided for Sections 9(3)(g)–9(3)(h).

In the event that trees from the above categories are identified by Leading Hand and/or Supervisor Arborist, the Electric Line Clearance personnel will be notified via email and/or it will be noted in the comments field within the issued work request.

The Leading Hand and/or Supervisor Arborist will inspect the tree to confirm the extent of works required. If the cutting of the tree for compliance will result in compromising the tree's health or structure or produce an unviable tree specimen, the assessor may warrant removal of the affected tree.

This will be in accordance to Sections 9(3)(g)–9(3)(h) and whilst adhering to Council's internal tree maintenance policies.

(11) Cutting or removing habitat for threatened fauna

Where the planning scheme determines a tree to be of ecological, historical or aesthetic significance, advice will be sought from Council's Planning Department on how to address the issue appropriately.

If action is required, then the Electric Line Clearance personnel will be informed of specific works scheduled that are required to address the issue.

Consideration of relevant legislation will be undertaken, and an appropriate process will be drawn up to continue work without compromising relevant legislation.

Where practicable, works will not be carried out at times of the breeding season of the affected fauna. All efforts will be made to consult a suitably knowledgeable and appropriate person to ensure the timing of works do not interfere with natural breeding cycles of the affected fauna.

When not practicable to cut or remove outside breeding season, translocation of threatened fauna will be required under the direction and supervision of an authorised wildlife handler.

DIVISION 3 – Notification, Consultation and dispute resolution

(16) Responsible person must publish notice before cutting or removing certain trees

Refer to information provided for Section 9(3)(p).

DIVISION 4 – Additional duties of responsible persons

(20) Duty relating to the safety of cutting or removal of trees close to an electric line.

Where Council and it's the Electric Line Clearance personnel are unsure of the safety of pruning or removing a tree, they will consult with the relevant local Distribution Business, AusNet Services.

PART 3 | MINIMUM CLEARANCE SPACES

DIVISION 2 – Alternative Compliance Mechanisms

(31) Application for approval of alternative compliance mechanism

Council does not currently and does not intend to use any alternative compliance mechanisms. If Council should apply to Energy Safe Victoria for approval to use an alternative compliance mechanism in respect of a span of an electric line or a class of spans, the application will include details of:

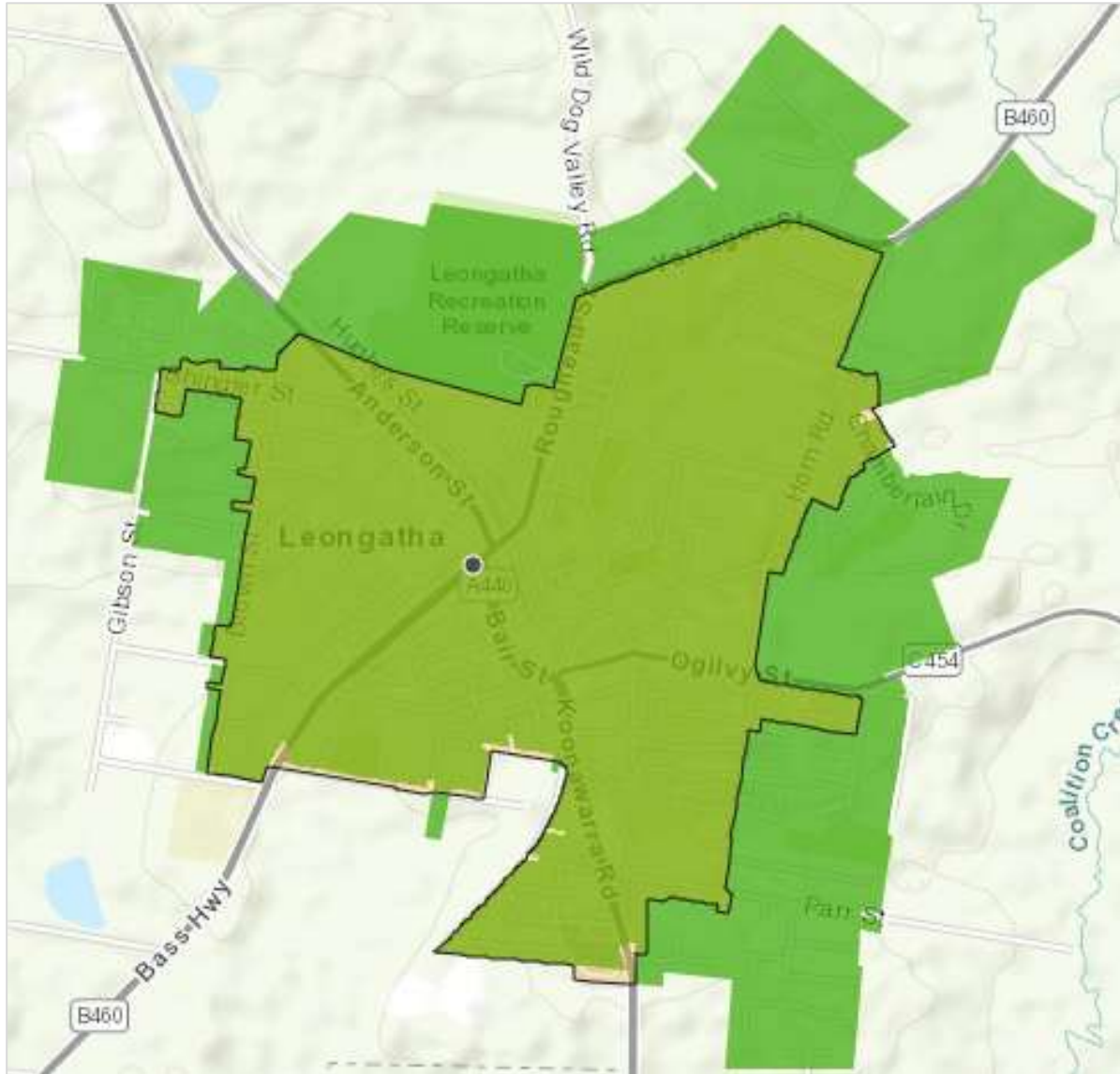
- The alternative compliance mechanism;
- A written confirmation from the Distribution Business or alternative qualified provider that includes:
 - The procedures to be adopted for commissioning, installing, operating, maintaining and decommissioning the alternative compliance mechanism;
 - The published technical standards that will be complied with when commissioning, installing, operating, maintaining and decommissioning the alternative compliance mechanism;
 - The location of the span or description of the class;
 - The minimum clearance space that the applicant proposes is to be applied in relation to the span, or class of spans, in respect of which the application is made;
 - A copy of the formal safety assessment prepared by the Distribution Business or an alternative qualified provider under Clause 32; and
 - A copy of the written agreement of the owner or the operator of the span; or the owner or the operator of each span that belongs to that class.



(32) Formal safety assessment of alternative compliance mechanism

Council does not currently and does not intend to use any alternative compliance mechanisms. As Council Officers are not qualified to provide a formal safety assessment, this will be prepared by the Distribution Business or an alternative qualified provider and will comply with the requirements as defined in Schedule 1 Part 3 Division 2 Clause 31(1) of the Code of Practice.

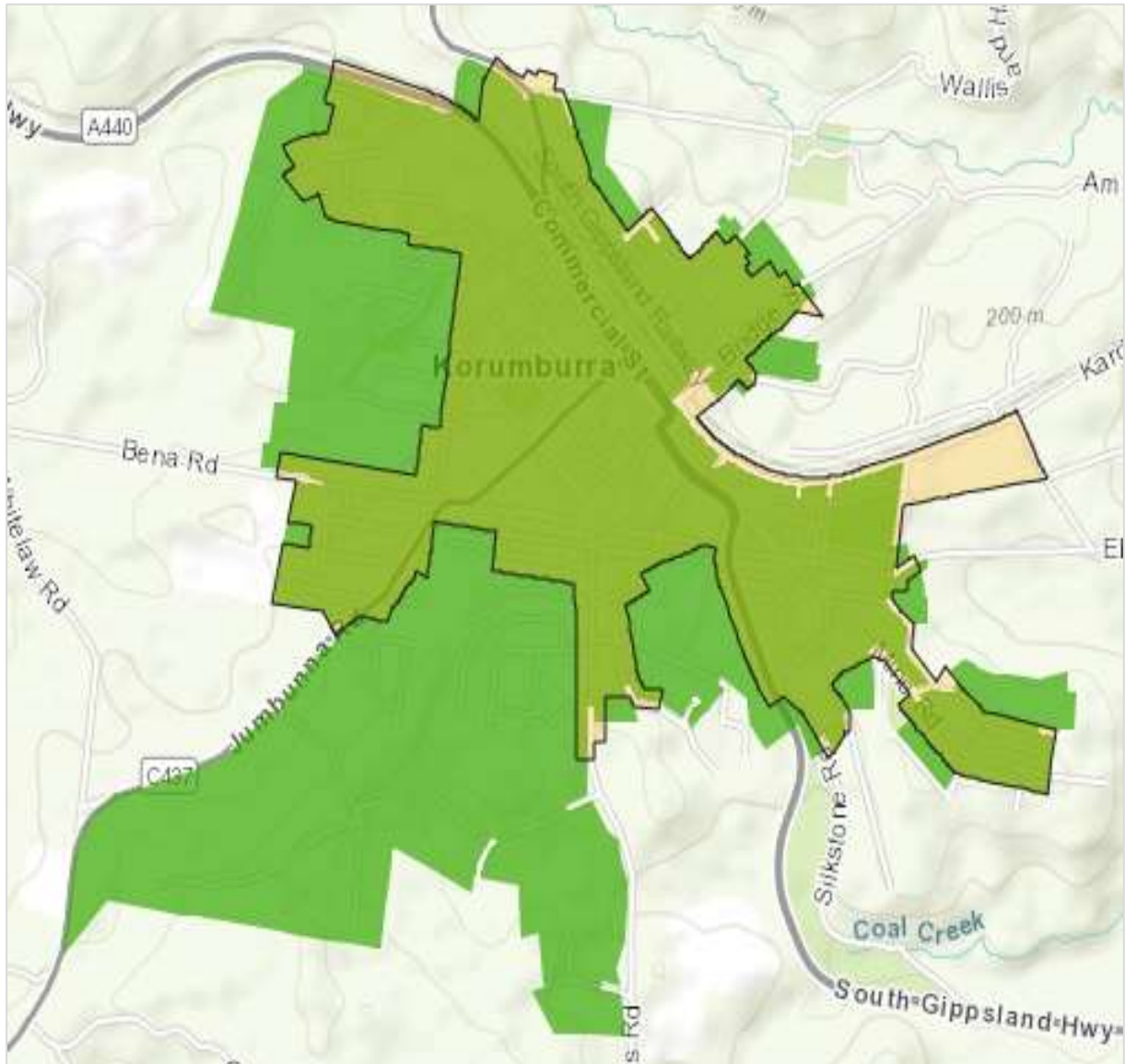
APPENDIX 1 | SGSC's Declared Boundaries – Town Maps – Leongatha and Korumburra



Leongatha



-  Low Bushfire Rated Areas (LBRA) within Council declared area
-  High Bushfire Rated Areas (HBRA) within Council declared area

Korumburra



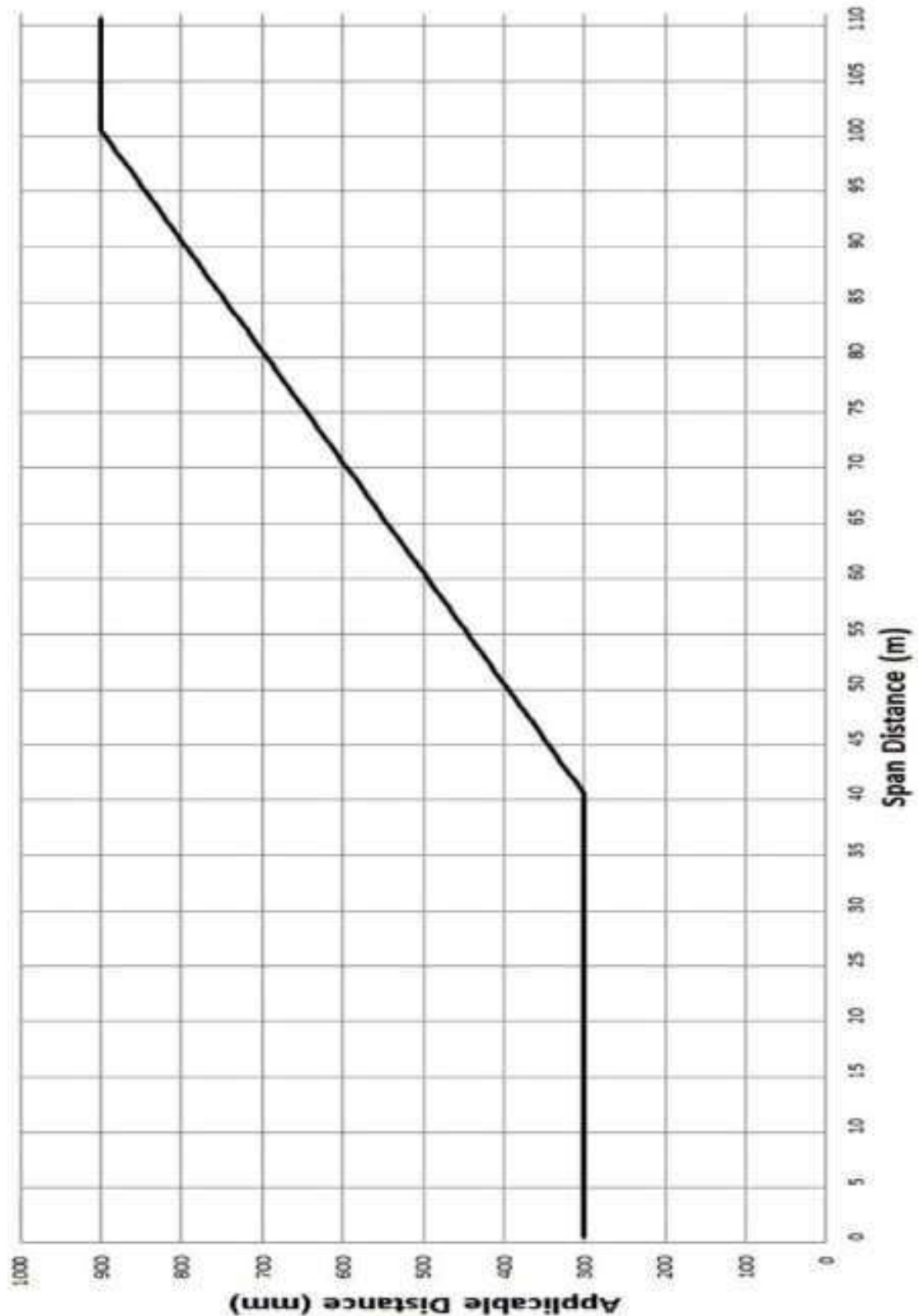
-  Low Bushfire Rated Areas (LBRA) within Council declared area
-  High Bushfire Rated Areas (HBRA) within Council declared area

□

APPENDIX 2 | Schedule 2 – Applicable Distance for Middle Two Thirds of a Span of an Electric Line (Graphs)

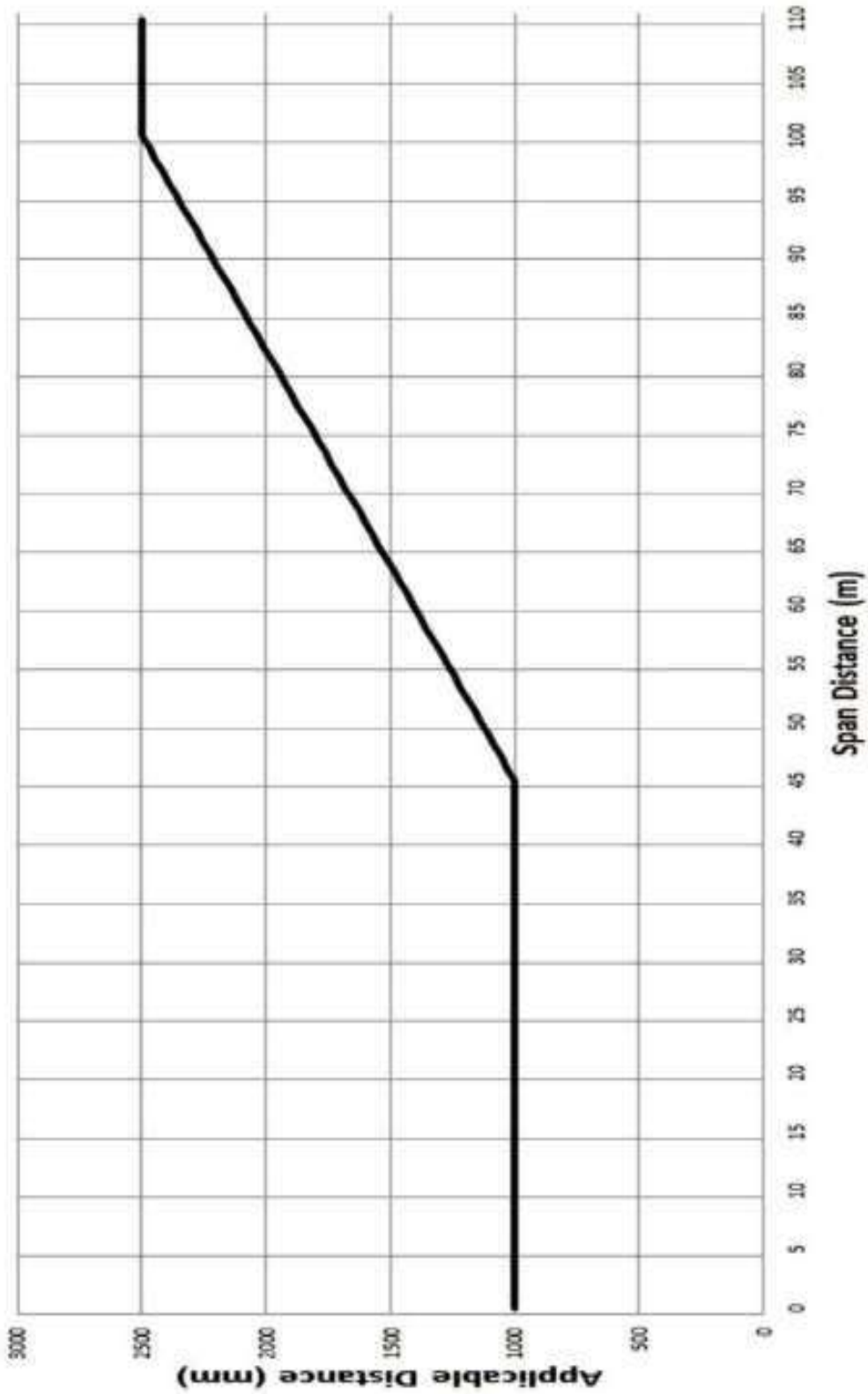
GRAPH 1 – INSULATED ELECTRIC LINES IN ALL AREAS

Clauses 3 and 24

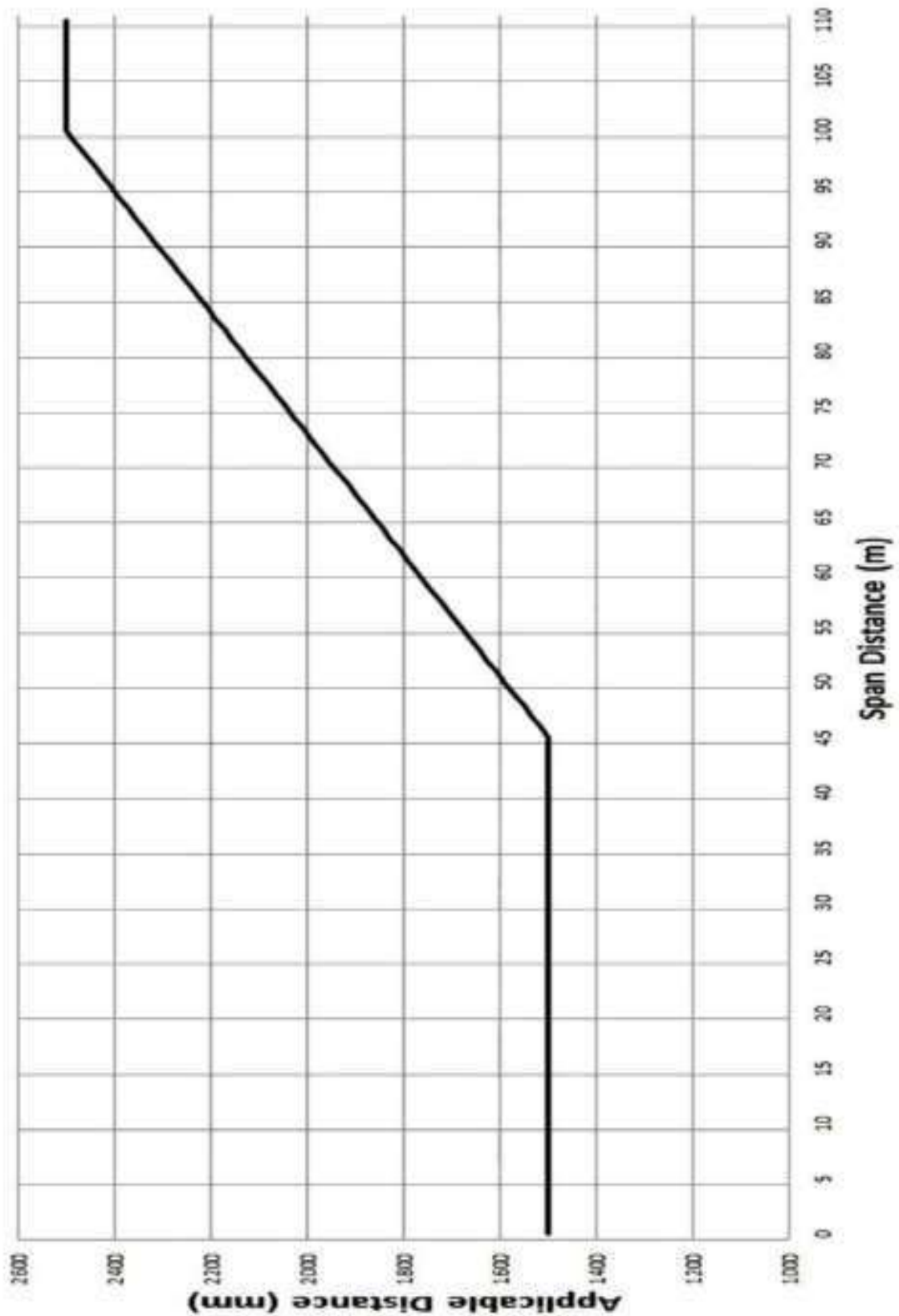


GRAPH 2 – UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINE IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA

Clauses 3 and 25

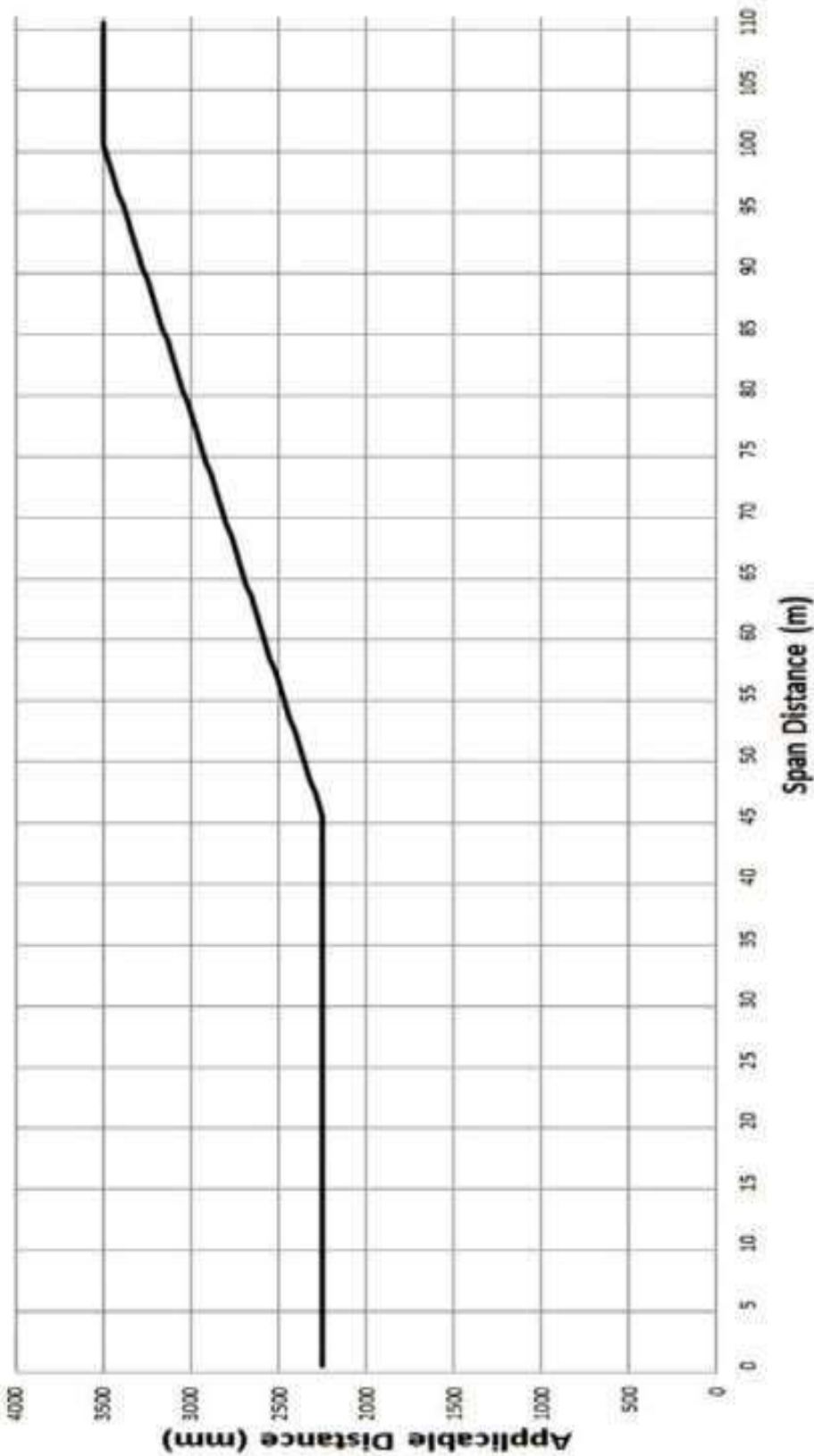


GRAPH 3 – UNINSULATED HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINE (OTHER THAN A 66 000 VOLT ELECTRIC LINE) IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA



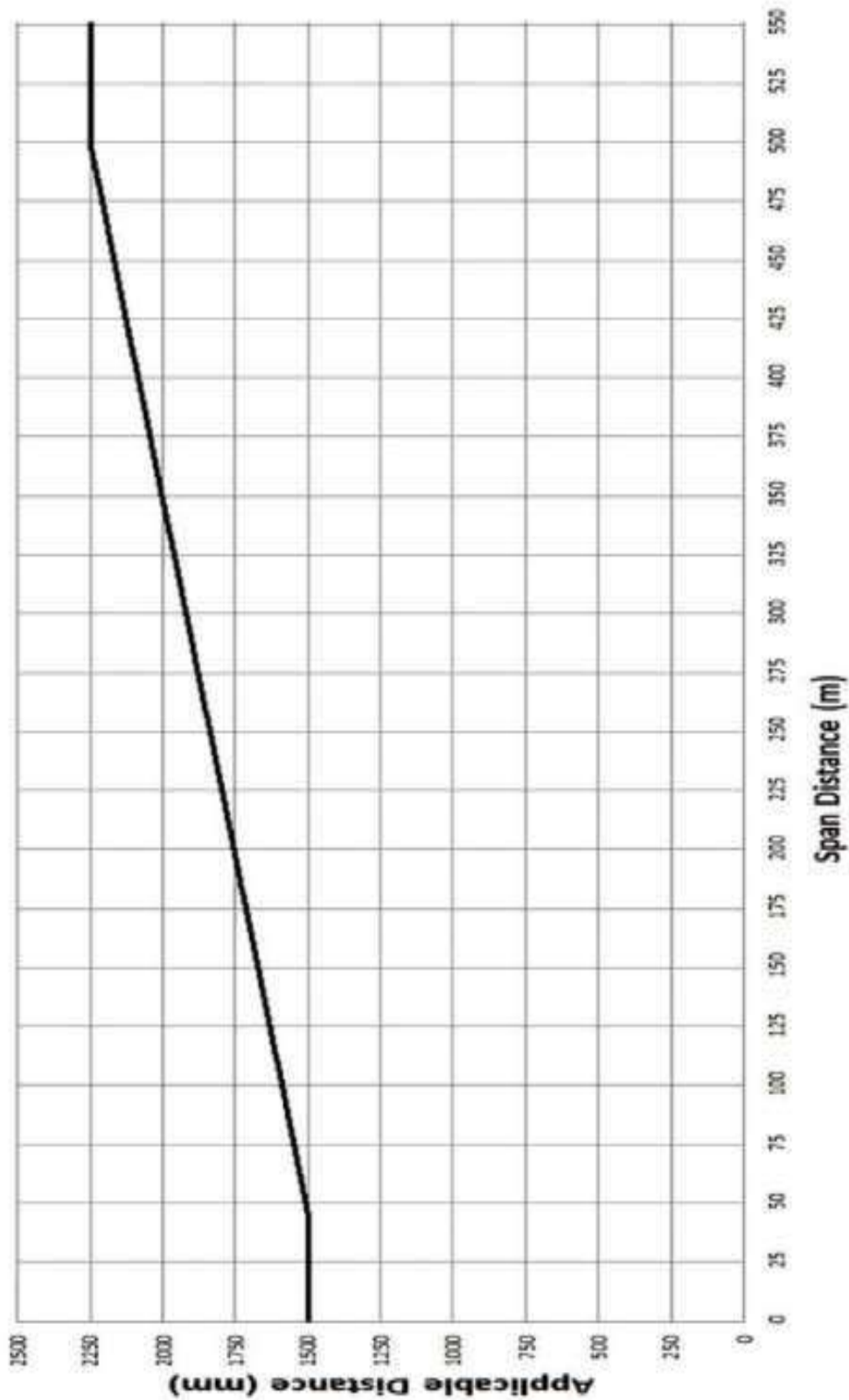
GRAPH 4 – UNINSULATED 66,000 VOLT ELECTRIC LINE IN LOW BUSHFIRE RISK AREA

Clauses 3 and 27



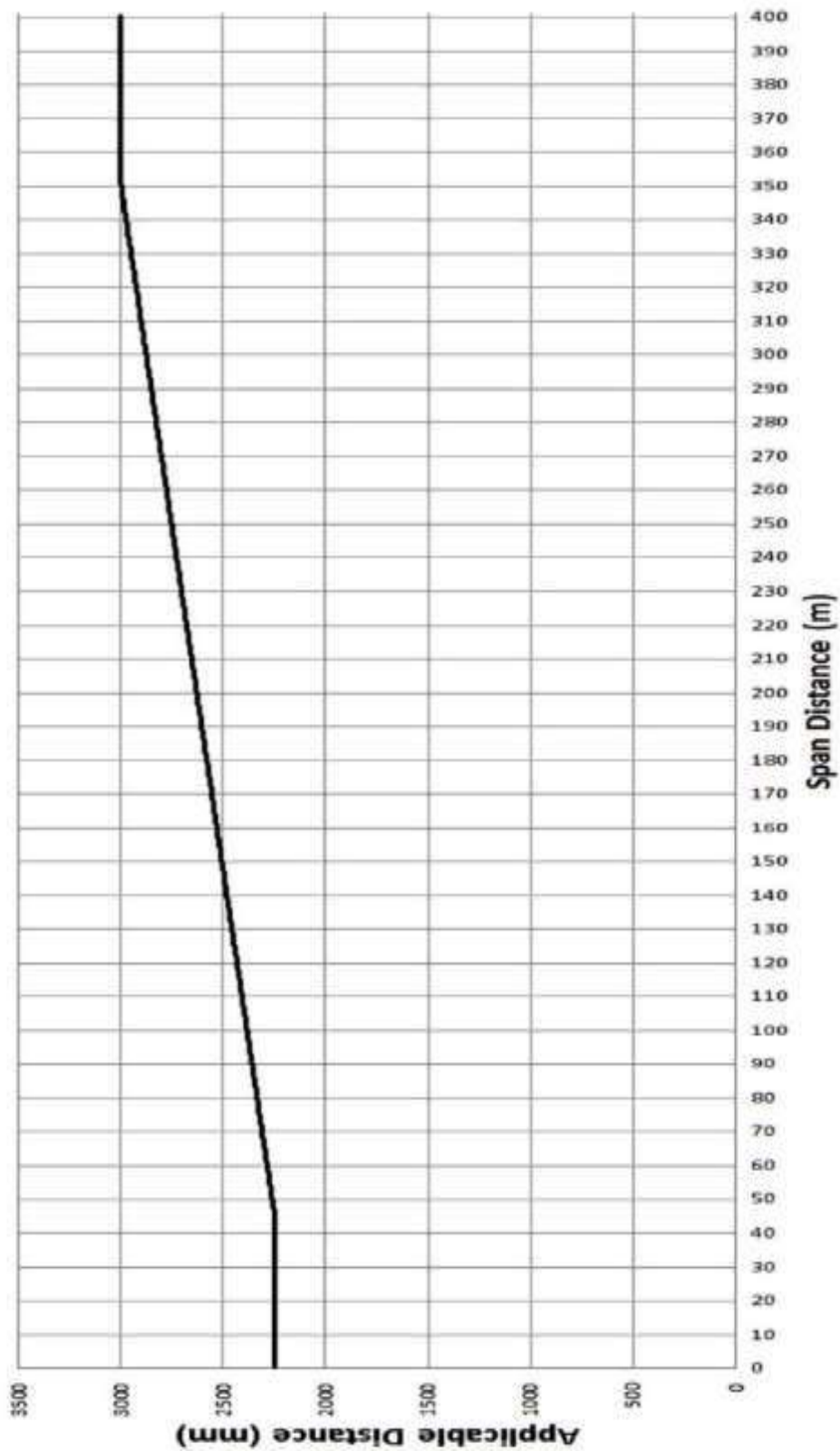
GRAPH 5 – UNINSULATED LOW VOLTAGE AND HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINE (OTHER THAN A 66 000 VOLT ELECTRIC LINE) IN HAZARDOUS BUSHFIRE RISK AREA

Clauses 3 and 28



GRAPH 6 – UNINSULATED 66 000 VOLT ELECTRIC LINE IN HAZARDOUS BUSHFIRE RISK AREA

Clauses 3 and 29



APPENDIX 3 | Electric Line Clearance Inspection Audit Checklist



South Gippsland
Shire Council
Come for the beauty. Stay for the lifestyle

Electric Line Clearance Inspection Audit Checklist

In house team / Contractor _____

Site / Location _____

Date _____ Time _____

Inspector _____

Signed by Inspector _____

Signed by Nominated Representative _____

	YES	NO	N/A
Safe Work Method Statement / Job Safety Analysis completed			
Traffic management signs in place			
Cone / bollards in place			
Staff wearing safety footwear, hard hats, ear protection, hi vis			
Electric line operators wearing long sleeve cotton shirts			
Safety observer present			
Compliance with AS 4373-2007 Pruning of amenity trees			
Vegetation clearance is to the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2015.			
Staff qualified and competent - holding current certifications			
Plant / equipment used correctly			
Remedial works required			
First aid kit			
Elevated work platform electrical test date			
Harness expiry date			

Notes: _____

APPENDIX 4 | Sample of Notification



(Letter Format)

To the Resident

Notification of Street Tree Electric Line Clearance Maintenance

In accordance with the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020, South Gippsland Shire Council will be carrying out electric line pruning clearances between «date» and «date» at the above location.

Council and/or contractors appointed by Council will need to use heavy machinery equipment to prune these trees and surface marks from this equipment will be kept to a minimum but sometimes this is not possible.

Council will attempt to have these works completed within 14 working days; subject to weather / environmental conditions.

For any general queries or any concerns with the works, please contact Council on 5662 9200 or email council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Steve Missen
Coordinator Parks and Gardens

APPENDIX 5 | Advertising Notification Sample



PUBLIC NOTICE **Upcoming Electric Line Clearance Works**

The South Gippsland Shire Council in accordance with its Electric Line Clearance Management Plan and its obligations under the Electric Line Clearance Regulations 2020, Council will be pruning street trees in the Leongatha and Korumburra between January – April 2023.

The Works are expected to commence 30 January 2023 and continue for 8 weeks.

The works are required to maintain a safe clearance from electrical lines.

Council apologises for any inconvenience caused while these necessary works are completed.

For information please contact Council on 5662 9200 or email council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au.