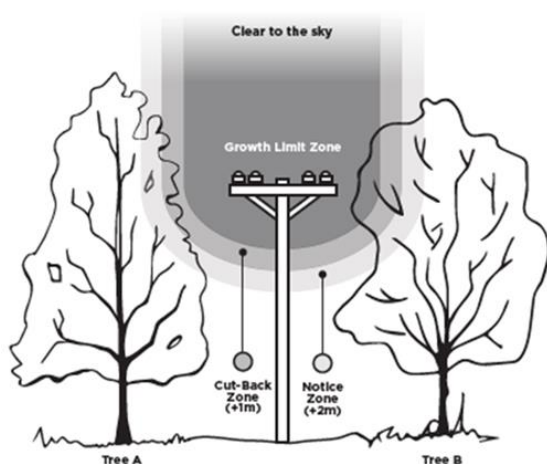


Title	Vegetation Policy
Owner	Peter Armstrong – GM Network
Approved date	14 January 2025
Review Period	24 Months

Definitions



Overhead line voltage	Growth Limit zone	Cut-back zone	Notice zone
400 Volts	0.5m	1.5m	2.5m
11,000 Volts	1.6m	2.6m	3.6m
22,000 Volts	2.0m	3.0m	4.0m
33,000 Volts	2.5m	3.5m	4.5m
66,000 Volts	4.0m	5.0m	6.0m

Growth Limit Zone: The space around a power line that trees must not encroach, even in windy or stormy conditions. The Growth Limit Zone varies based on the voltage of the power line that the vegetation is in close proximity to.

Notice Zone: This area extends two metres beyond the Growth Limit Zone.

Clear to the sky: This area is the zone extended upwards to prevent tree overhang.

Cut-back zone: This zone is the space that extends no more than 1m beyond the Growth Limit zone.

Fall Zone: The fall zone of a tree is the area that a tree may fall into, for the purposes of this policy it is considered to be 1.5 x the height of the tree.

Tree: For the purpose of this policy, 'tree' includes all types of vegetation, including shrubs.

Hazardous Tree: A tree that encroaches the Notice Zone or Growth Limit Zone of a power line.

Potentially Hazardous Tree: A tree that does not encroach the Notice Zone or Growth Limit Zone but is still considered a risk to nearby power lines. This can include, for example:

- A tree that sheds foliage or bark in a close proximity to power lines.
- A tree that has overhanging branches.
- A tree located away from power lines, where a power line is within the tree's fall zone.

Power Lines: For the purpose of this policy, 'power line/s' also includes poles, conductors, fittings, transformers and other associated equipment.

Network Power Lines: assets owned by EA Networks

Service Lines: lines, poles and associated equipment that are not owned by EA Networks.

Related Documents and Legislation

- Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003 ('the Regulations')
- Electricity Act 1992
- Electricity (Safety) Regulations 2010
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Conservation Act 1987
- Land Transport Act 1998
- Ashburton District Plan

Policy Objective

To provide a secure and safe power supply to all EA Networks (EAN) consumers by minimising the impact of trees located near power lines.

Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all EA Networks staff, and representatives.

Policy Statement

EA Networks is required to act without delay to remove any immediate safety hazard to persons or property from trees; in some cases, this may be achieved by cutting or trimming any tree to the extent necessary to remove immediate danger or to restore supply.

Power supply maybe isolated to the relevant area, without notice until satisfactory works have been completed.

EA Networks will work with affected customers, as far as practicable, to arrange a suitable time. Unless otherwise mutually agreed, 10 working days' notice will be provided for any isolation.

At the customer's request EA Networks may, in some cases, contribute to the cost of placing lines at risk from tree damage underground.

Risk Based Prioritisation for Vegetation Management

The following table provides the priority order for addressing vegetation hazards to the network, to ensure best value is derived from the vegetation management budget.

Priority	Category	Commentary
1	Reactive/Customer driven	Where trees are currently causing issues, touching the lines or a customer has made inquiries
2	Sub transmission	Fall zone and GLZ trees at risk of causing disruption to the 66kV & 33kV network. This includes the underbuilt lines
3	Lines impacting Urban feeders	Rural lines that would cause urban (high customer density) feeders to trip
4	Line rebuild/conversion project areas	Working in with outages for planned project/maintenance works
5	Known high fault areas	Where there is a record of wind events that have caused trees to impact the network e.g. the foothills, where the wind comes out of the gorges etc.
7	Rural feeders with high ICP density	e.g. Hakatere Feeder with Hakatere Huts without backfeed
8	Significant loads	e.g. feeders affecting rural schools, large employers/industrial processors with high value load (Talleys, ANZCO etc.)
9	Cyclic	Maintenance program rotating through the network feeders

Over time, the proportion of reactive work will be driven down as known issues are eliminated and the proportion of cyclic management will increase.

Trees near Network Lines

Inspection

EA Networks is responsible for inspecting trees that are growing near or within falling distance of network power lines

Trees Encroaching Cut back or Growth Limit Zones

a) Tree Owner Notification

Should EA Networks become aware of a Hazardous, or Potentially Hazardous tree that encroaches the Notice or Growth Limit Zone of any EA Networks owned power line, contact is to be made with the tree owner. The level of notification e.g. phone call, letter etc. will be determined by the level of risk the hazardous tree presents.

This approach is also to be applied to customer owned lines.

b) Responsibilities

The Regulations clearly state that it is the tree owner's responsibility to ensure trees are cut to a distance outside of the Cut Back Zone of EA Networks owned lines.

This is not always practicable and at times not able to be done in a timely manner. EA Networks will work with our customers to help facilitate this.

The first cut or trim of a hazardous tree will be undertaken at EA Networks' cost as per the regulations. Ongoing maintenance of hazardous trees is the responsibility of the tree owner.

c) Tree Removal

Tree owners can elect to have EA Networks cut a hazardous tree at ground level, free of charge, to minimize future maintenance.

Clearance of any debris associated with removal will be mutually agreed between the tree owner and EA Networks. This will usually involve the trees being cut into manageable lengths, and debris placed in a pile suitable for burning.

Potentially Hazardous Trees

Should EA Networks become aware of a potentially hazardous tree, EA Networks will seek trimming or removal, by mutual agreement with the tree owner.

EA Networks will work with the tree owner for the benefit of the network and in some case subsidise costs associated with the removal of a potentially hazardous tree. It is generally the responsibility of the tree owner to clear any resulting debris.

The Regulations do not require tree owners to act regarding potentially hazardous trees, but should the tree owner not agree to tree trimming or removal, they will be made aware that they

may be liable for costs associated with damage to lines and/or interruption to supply caused by a potentially hazardous tree.

At the tree owners request EA Networks may, in some cases, contribute to the cost of placing lines at risk from tree damage underground.

Roadside Line Extensions

a) New Customer Request

New customers may request an extension to the roadside lines network.

If an extension will breach the Cut Back Zone of an existing tree on the customer's property, the customer is liable for all costs associated with tree trimming or removal.

If an extension breaches the Cut Back Zone of an existing tree on another property, EA Networks will liaise with the tree owner on the customer's behalf to seek mutual agreement for tree trimming or removal. If agreement cannot be reached, the arbitration and compensation provisions of the Regulations will apply. All costs associated with arbitration, trimming and/or removal of the tree will be the responsibility of the customer.

b) EA Networks Extensions

EA Networks may, at times, extend its roadside line network. If an extension breaches the Cut Back Zone of an existing tree, EA Networks will negotiate with the tree owner to reach mutual agreement. If agreement cannot be reached, the arbitration and compensation provisions of the Regulations will apply. All costs for arbitration, trimming or removal of the tree will be the responsibility of EA Networks.

Tree Related Faults and Damage

If a tree owner fails to take action, after being advised by EA Networks of a hazardous or potentially hazardous tree, EA Networks may seek recovery of any costs associated with damage and/or restoration of supply.

Obligation to Remove Danger

EA Networks may cut or trim the tree to the extent necessary to remove the danger but, if EA Networks wishes to cut or trim the tree so that it no longer encroaches the Cut Back Zone, EA Networks must obtain the consent of the tree owner.

Privately Owned On-Property Power Lines

Responsibilities

All privately owned on-property lines are always the responsibility of the property owner.

EA Networks will provide free, no-obligation advice to assist the power line owner(s) in maintaining a safe and secure power line. The advice will include consideration of:

- Safety to all persons.
- The protection of EA Networks owned assets located on their property from damage caused by trees.
- That any tree-related issues do not impact on continuous power supply to other EA Networks customers.

EA Networks will, without prejudice, act as an agent if the tree owner is different to the private line owner. In the event of EA Networks being unable to reach an agreement by all parties, any damage from trees will be a civil matter between the two parties.

Clearance Distance

The Regulations require that the relevant Growth Limit Zone should apply.

The line owner(s) will be responsible for any costs associated with damage or restoration of the power supply, caused by trees.

Supply Isolation

EA Networks will disconnect supply (within normal working hours), free of charge, for tree maintenance.

EA Networks must receive notice of at least 5 working days (if only the tree owner's supply is affected) or 21 calendar days (if other customers are affected) when disconnection is required.

Contractors

Contractor Selection

Tree owners may use any competent contractor of their choice for work required by this policy, provided that clearances meet the Regulations, relevant codes of practice or any dispensations granted. Contractors can demonstrate competence by completing EA Networks' contractor health and safety prequalification process.

EA Networks can assist in the arrangement of a suitable tree contractor on the tree owners' behalf, if required.

Contractor Requirements

Contractors must, at all times, meet all health and safety requirements.

Within working hours and given 3 working days' notice, EA Networks will isolate private lines for tree maintenance free of charge.

Network lines affecting more than just the tree owners supply that need isolating for tree maintenance are subject to Planned Interruption notification requirements. To meet these 21 days' notice to EA Networks is required.

Costs and Inspection

Any costs that may be incurred by EA Networks must be agreed to prior to the commencement of any planned work. EA Networks will inspect completed work prior to payment being made.

No-Interest Applications

No-Interest Notice Process

Tree owners can apply for a No-Interest Notice if they do not wish to be responsible for the on-going maintenance of a tree near power lines. If required, a formal process for this is covered in the Regs.

If a tree owner declares that they have no interest in the tree they relinquish their responsibility for the tree and in most cases EA Networks will remove the tree. EA Networks is responsible for this.

Dispensation and Arbitration

Application

A tree owner may apply to EA Networks for dispensation from cutting or trimming a tree within the Notice Zone. A formal process for this is covered in the Regs.

Dispensation

If dispensation is granted, the tree owner does not have to cut a tree inside the Notice Zone; however, they must ensure the tree does not ever encroach the Growth Limit Zone.

A previously granted dispensation may be revoked if a tree encroaches the growth limit zone beyond the dispensation zone, or if dispensation conditions are violated.

Arbitration

A tree owner may apply to an arbitrator if dispensation is not granted, or to dispute the terms of a dispensation. Any application must be made in writing no later than 5 working days from receipt of notice regarding a dispensation.

Document Review History

Version Number	Reviewed By.	Issue Date	Reason
1	N/A	11/11/2022	New document first issue
2	J Bottomley	14/01/2025	Document reviewed

Appendix 1 – Arbitrator List

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EA Networks Policy – Document Change Request

Memo to: GM - Network
EA Networks
Private Bag 802
Ashburton 7740

Change details: (attach separate sheets as necessary).

Change details: (attach separate sheets as necessary).						
Paragraphs affected:						
Priority:	Urgent (within 1 week)		Routine (Within 12 months)		Low (Next Review)	
Submitted by: (Print Name)						
Date:						

Document Change Request - Acknowledgement

Dear [NAME]

Thank you for your suggestion regarding changes to this Policy.

Your request has been noted and added to our review program. Should we require any additional information regarding your notification then we will be in contact with you. Thank you for your contribution to improving the quality of EA Networks documentation.

Kind regards

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GM- Network

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Date