

# YOUR NETWORK, YOUR NEWS.

## ENABLING THE ENERGY FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITIES

NOV 2024

**In this issue:**

- An update from our Chief Executive
- Enabling the energy future of our communities
- Delivering for you – Electricity network upgrades
- Our communities
- Our people

Aurora Energy’s community update about the electricity network in Ōtepoti Dunedin, Central Otago/Wānaka and Tāhuna Queenstown.





## AN UPDATE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

### Kia ora koutou,

It's been another busy six months since our last 'Your Network, Your News', and we have a lot to share with you.

It's an exciting time as we prepare for the future, supporting communities and businesses to transition toward electrification. For customers it means things like EV charging, connecting solar, and accepting two-way electricity flows on a network that was initially designed to be one way. For us this means moving from being a 'traditional' network operator to being more agile and digitally enabled, so we have the capacity for greater and more variable loads.

We recently published our Annual Report and a public-facing summary of our Annual Delivery Report, which show how we are performing and where we have been focusing to improve the electricity network.

I encourage you to read them on our website.

The work we are doing to invest \$560 million to improve the safety and reliability of our network is making a real difference. It's also helping to enable the energy future of our communities in Ōtepoti Dunedin, Central Otago/Wānaka, and Tāhuna Queenstown to have flexible choices and adopt new technologies as they become available. It's meant a significant increase in work, and we remain committed to delivering our programme as efficiently and effectively as possible.

For much of this year, it's felt like we've been on the minds of many across the Otago region. In March, the Dunedin City Council proposed selling Aurora Energy, followed by public consultation. In September, the Council voted overwhelmingly against the sale. During that time it was business as usual for us (and it still is) but it was heartening to hear how much

support there is for Aurora Energy and the value we bring to the communities we serve.

The following pages are just a snapshot of what we've done across our network. I hope you enjoy reading this edition of 'Your Network, Your News'. I am proud of what we have achieved so far, and we are looking forward to continuing to deliver for you next year.

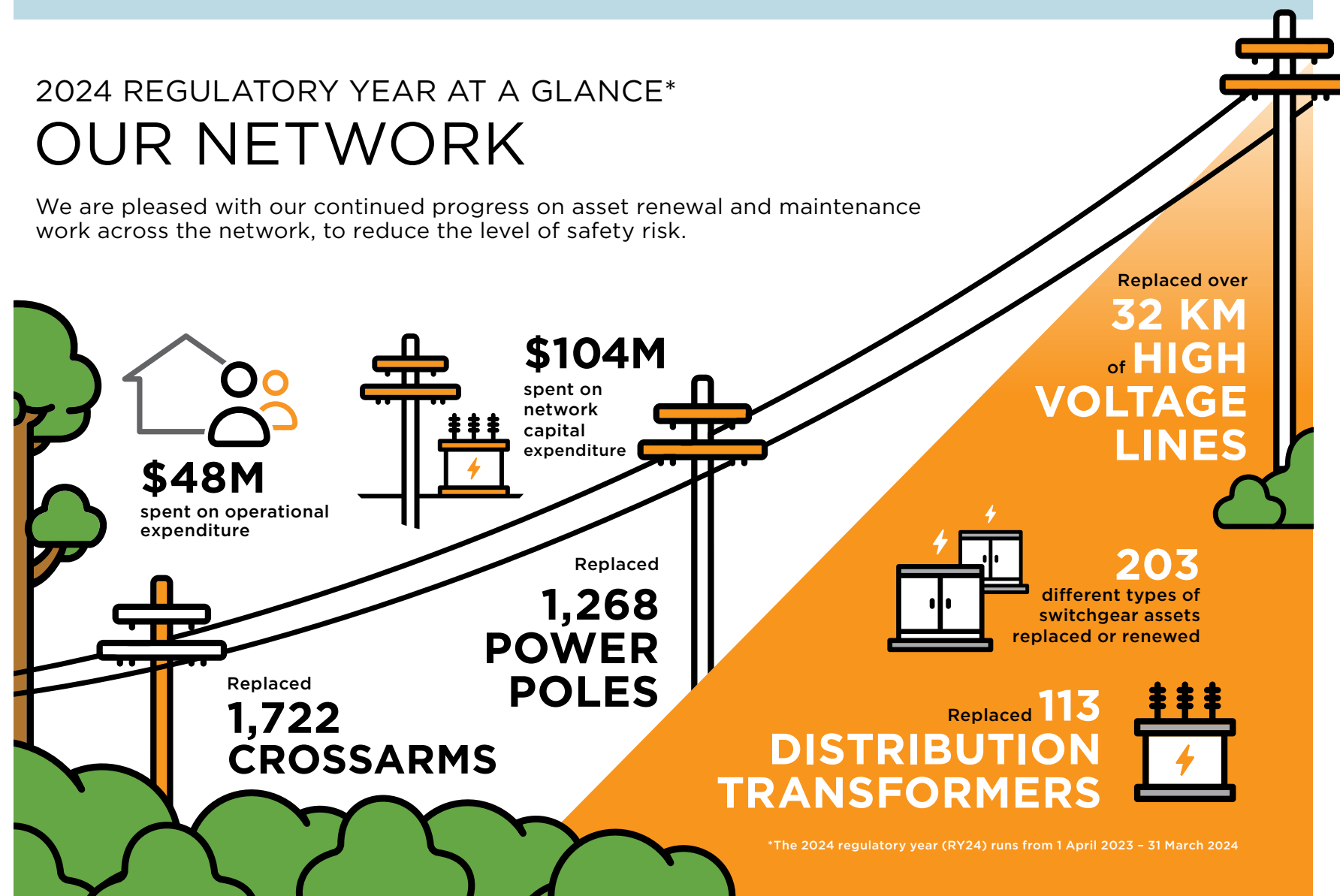
Because this is our last community update for 2024, I want to wish you and your family a safe and restful holiday period.



Chief Executive Richard Fletcher

## 2024 REGULATORY YEAR AT A GLANCE\* OUR NETWORK

We are pleased with our continued progress on asset renewal and maintenance work across the network, to reduce the level of safety risk.



## ENABLING THE ENERGY FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITIES

The way communities are using technology is rapidly evolving, with an increase in electric vehicles and more people generating their own electricity through solar panels and battery storage. Aurora Energy plays a crucial role in enabling the energy future of our communities by ensuring our network can support the changing energy needs of customers.

### NEW RITCHIES ELECTRIC BUSES FOR DUNEDIN

We are excited to support Ritchies Transport, one of New Zealand's largest bus and coach operators, to reach its electrification goals for electric bus charging in Dunedin.

Our new connections team worked closely with Ritchies to prepare a charging site for their 11 new electric buses. The dedicated charging station at their depot features a 750 kVA transformer, supplying six twin-gun 120 kW charging stations. By the end of their first year on the roads of Dunedin, the buses are projected to save approximately 250,000 litres of diesel and reduce carbon emissions by 600 tonnes.



Evan from Aurora Energy's Connections team charging one of Ritchies electric buses



CE Richard Fletcher speaking at the Electrifying Queenstown event

### ELECTRIFYING QUEENSTOWN

Earlier this year, we were proud to support the inaugural 'Electrifying Queenstown' event, in partnership with the Queenstown Chamber of Commerce and Destination Queenstown. We focused on the long-term economic benefits of electrification to the local business community, along with practical solutions to support their transition towards a carbon-zero visitor economy by 2030.

A panel discussion discussed the tangible long-term economic impacts of decarbonisation and electrification for businesses.

Attendees had the opportunity to talk to local businesses to learn about the steps they are taking to reach their sustainability goals.

## CUSTOMER CHARTER

We were excited to launch our new Customer Charter in August. It better reflects what customers have said is important to them and follows public consultation on the proposed changes last November.

There are two parts to the Charter: Customer Commitments and Customer Service Incentive Payment Scheme. They outline our service commitments to you, what we need from you to provide a safe and reliable electricity supply to your property, and how we will compensate you if we fail to meet certain customer service incentives. You can find both the Customer Commitments and the Customer Service Incentive Payment Scheme on our website.





# DELIVERING FOR YOU

We are nearly three quarters of the way through a large, five-year work programme and are investing \$560 million to upgrade our electricity network. Below is a snapshot of major projects recently completed or currently underway, to ensure future resilience of your electricity supply. Large infrastructure projects take time to deliver and we hope you enjoy following our updates.

## ŌTEPOTI DUNEDIN



Pole replacements at Allanton

We have had a busy six months across our Ōtepoti Dunedin network, from Allanton to Aramoana. We completed a range of bundled work packages replacing:

**65**  power poles    **188**  cross arms    **12.5km**  of power lines



Strengthening Green Island's power supply

### Green Island zone substation upgrade

We are making great progress on our upgrade of the Green Island zone substation. This project will strengthen the electricity supply for 4,300 customers in the wider Green Island area, from Concord to Ocean View, by replacing the transformers and ageing equipment, and building a new switchroom. Construction started in February and is scheduled to be completed this month. Electrical works are due to begin in 2025 and the project will be completed by the end of next year.



Progress on the Smith Street zone substation

### Smith Street zone substation upgrade

Three thousand customers in the Central Dunedin and Roslyn areas will benefit from upgrades to the Smith Street zone substation. The project began in July this year and is taking a staged approach until mid-2025. It will future-proof and strengthen the electricity supply by replacing end-of-life equipment and building a new switchroom.

## CENTRAL OTAGO/ WĀNAKA



The project team in front of the new auto transformer

### New auto transformer for Upper Clutha and Wānaka

Between mid-October and mid-November, we commissioned a new transformer that will significantly increase the network capacity for those living in the Upper Clutha and Wānaka areas. The 50MVA auto transformer was connected to the existing Upper Clutha network at the Cromwell grid exit point, and will be used on top of the two existing 36MVA auto transformers. The extra capacity will help future-proof the network, responding to increasing demand and giving customers confidence as we move toward a more electrified future.

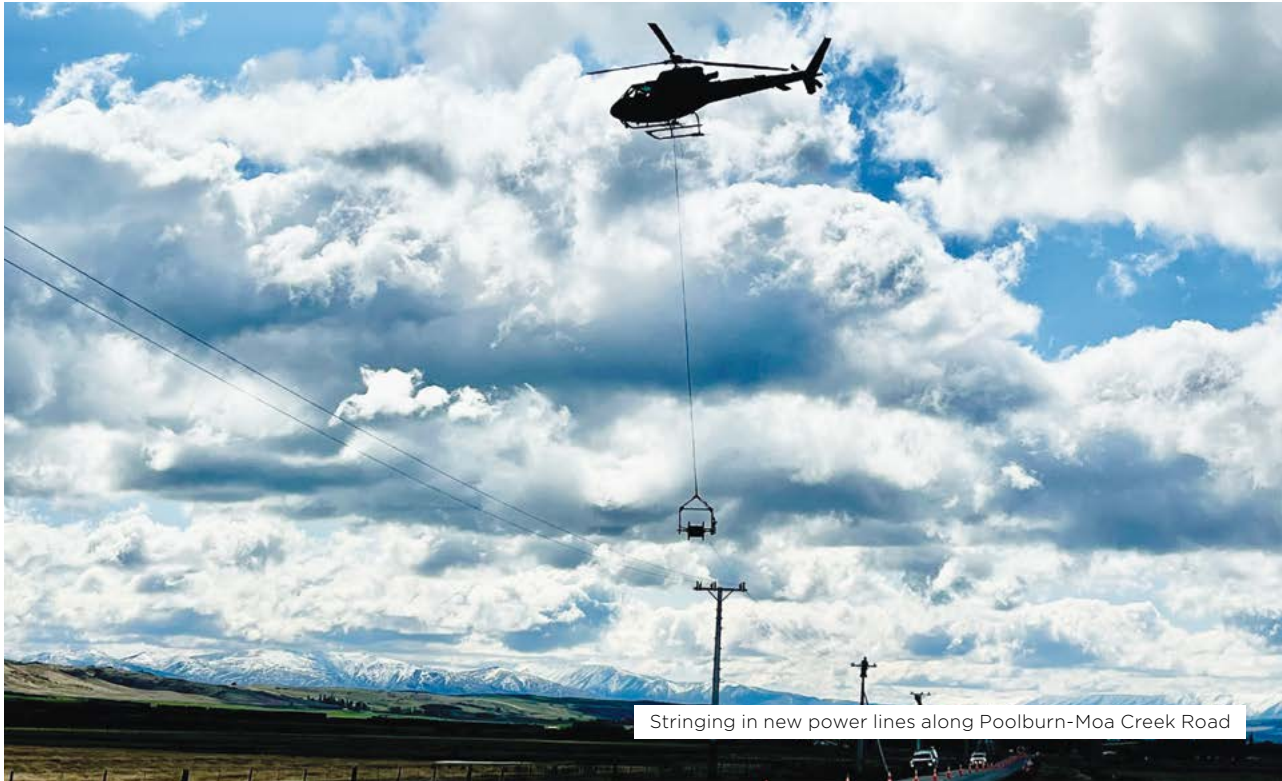


Pole replacements in Roxburgh

### Roxburgh township bundled work programme

We have recently completed a large three month bundled work programme in the Roxburgh township, replacing 20 power poles, 15 cross arms, and 2.5km of power lines. During larger projects like these, we take a lot of steps to reduce customer impact as much as possible. These include:

- Bundling multiple jobs together to reduce the overall number of planned outages
- Multiple crews working together to minimise outage frequency and times
- Where possible, completing some parts of the work live line (where power is still running through the power lines) to reduce the number of planned outages
- Seasonal considerations, such as completing the work ahead of the busy summer period for Central Otago



Stringing in new power lines along Poolburn-Moa Creek Road

We have had a busy six months across our Central Otago/ Wānaka network, from Millers Flat to Wānaka. We completed a range of bundled work packages replacing:

**61**  cross arms

**92**  power poles

**12.8km**  of power lines



## TĀHUNA QUEENSTOWN



Pole replacements happening at Nevis Bluff

We have had a busy six months across our Tāhuna Queenstown network, from Gibbston to Glenorchy. We completed a range of bundled work packages, replacing:

**48** power poles  
**5km** of power lines



Progress on the Queenstown zone substation upgrade

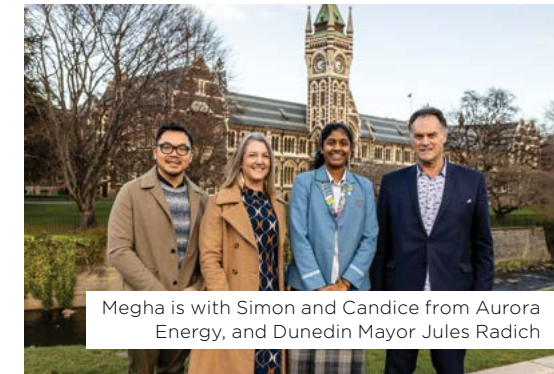
### Queenstown zone substation upgrade

We have an exciting project underway to upgrade the Queenstown zone substation. The substation, which supplies 2,600 customers in Queenstown and Glenorchy, is an important switching station as it connects to Commonage, Frankton GXP (where Aurora Energy connects to the national grid), and Fernhill. This project will future-proof the electricity network and strengthen the electricity supply for all customers in the area. It will also lay the groundwork for the future outdoor 33 kV switchgear replacement project, where a new indoor switchgear building will be constructed after 2030.

The first stage of the project, which involved enabling works and replacing the existing retaining wall, was completed mid-2024. The new retaining wall means the new buildings can be constructed to an earthquake rating of 'Importance Level 4'. This will ensure the long-term stability of the site and improve safety for all users. In August, we began the second stage of this project, which involves constructing a new control room and switchgear building. This will be followed by installing new indoor 11 kV switchgear and replacing the electrical protection and control systems.

## OUR COMMUNITIES

We are in the community every day – connecting power to new homes and businesses and working on the poles, wires and substations that carry electricity to customers. We value feedback and are dedicated to making a positive difference in the communities we serve.



Megha is with Simon and Candice from Aurora Energy, and Dunedin Mayor Jules Radich



Science and Technology Fair winners tour the Ward St substation



BA5

We are proud to be the prime sponsor of the Aurora Energy Otago Science and Technology Fair for the 20th year. This year's fair attracted 282 entries from 18 schools, involving around 350 students from across the region. Year 12 St Hilda's Collegiate School student Megha Senthikumar (pictured) took away the Best in Fair award for the second year running.

We had a record number of students and parents attend our Science and Technology Fair winners tour in September. We took them behind the scenes to meet some of our key staff, to visit our network operations centre and the Ward St substation. The tour is a great opportunity to showcase what we do and the exciting opportunities at Aurora Energy.

In September we hosted a Business After 5 (BA5) event in Dunedin with Business South, where our Chief Executive spoke to the local business community members about the future of the network and his vision of how to get there. It was our largest turnout to date, with around 170 people attending.

## OUR PEOPLE

We spoke to Mitchell Beserra, who has been part of the Aurora Energy graduate programme for the last two years, about his role as a graduate engineer. Mitchell has recently accepted a full time permanent position following the completion of his graduate programme, where he got to experience a number of different roles within the business. For more information about our graduate programme, you can get in touch with us at [peopleandculture@auroraenergy.nz](mailto:peopleandculture@auroraenergy.nz)

**It's an exciting time to work in the electricity industry – what are you most looking forward to seeing happen in this space over the next couple of years?**

I'm excited to see the advances in technology and the changes over the next decade. A key interest of mine is in the low voltage space and I'm keen to help Aurora Energy expand on its ability to support its consumers and build a robust network. There are going to be many new advances here and, as a result, a shift away from the current operating model. The industry has many firsts ahead and I'm looking forward to being a part of them.

**How are you helping prepare for the future?**

As part of the Network Planning team, our sights are always set to the future. Not only are we

responsible for identifying the needs of the future network but we also tend to be the drivers behind new technologies and innovation. Personally, I have been involved in maintaining and improving our network models which help us to evaluate the existing network and future projects.

**What has been the highlight of being part of the graduate programme at Aurora Energy?**

The most memorable part has been getting to experience a wide range of different projects and teams. I have gained invaluable knowledge working with different experts at Aurora. This holistic approach has

already proved beneficial in helping me tailor my work based on the other teams involved and their needs.



**JOIN THE TEAM**  
Aurora Energy is a great place to work! Head to our website to view our current vacancies: [www.auroraenergy.co.nz/careers](http://www.auroraenergy.co.nz/careers)





# DOING DIY? CHECK FOR POWER LINES

When planning DIY jobs around the home, always put safety first and check your surroundings for overhead lines and underground cables. Before you start work you can submit a 'close approach request' or ask for a temporary disconnection via our website. This process is quick and easy, and it could save your life. As your local lines company, whatever work you're doing, we want you to do it safely.

**Check for  
electricity cables  
before you dig**

**Look for power  
lines before you  
start work**

**Need a close  
approach request?**

[auroraenergy.co.nz](https://auroraenergy.co.nz)

0800 22 00 05

## BE SWITCHED ON TO SAFETY

ANY QUESTIONS? GET IN TOUCH



0800 22 00 05



[auroraenergy.co.nz](https://auroraenergy.co.nz)



[info@auroraenergy.nz](mailto:info@auroraenergy.nz)



[@auroraenergynz](https://www.facebook.com/auroraenergynz)



[@auroraenergynz](https://www.instagram.com/auroraenergynz)



[auroraenergynz](https://www.linkedin.com/company/auroraenergynz)

Aurora Energy is a wholly owned subsidiary of Dunedin City Holdings Limited, which in turn is owned by the Dunedin City Council. Our principal regulators are the Commerce Commission and the Electricity Authority.