

Media statement – for immediate release
11.30am, Friday 13 September 2013

Progress to restore power continues

Electricity remains out to 6,500 Orion customers this morning. Of the original 28,000 customers that lost power on Tuesday night, due to the gale force winds, 75% have now had power restored.

The areas without power are predominantly in the rural region west of Christchurch, while some smaller areas within Christchurch city are also affected.

“The extent of damage we are facing is significant and we are continuing to uncover more damage as we progress through our network repair. This is not an easy repair and as a result some customers will unfortunately be without power for a few more days. We hope everyone will be back on by end of day Monday but as we get closer to areas like Windwhistle we may uncover even more damage,” says Orion Chief Executive Rob Jamieson.

“Our plan is to restore the network mostly from an east to west direction. Our priority is to reconnect the areas with the most customers first, before moving onto those faults which only affect a small number of customers. We are also working with Selwyn District Council to prioritise water supplies,” continues Mr Jamieson.

“Given damage to surrounding areas we haven’t been able to call on the usual mutual support from neighbouring lines companies as they are busy fixing their own networks. However, contractors from Marlborough and Wellington are now able to give us additional support which is helping.”

An update of yesterday’s map showing expected restoration times for different areas will be attached to our next update at 4.00pm.

“We appreciate that for customers still without power it is difficult and frustrating, and we thank them for their patience. All available crews are working to restore power as quickly and safely as they can,” says Mr Jamieson.

If you see a fallen power line, or a tree on a power line, please stay well clear and call us immediately on 0800 363 9898. Also, we appeal for people not to try and remove trees and branches from power lines. The lines may still be live. Please leave any works near electricity lines to our staff and contractors.

Our next update will be at 4.00pm.

ENDS