

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SHEET • CONNECTIVITY

Interconnectors explained

What projects like Marinus Link are, why they're built and why communities are asking hard questions

The key idea: sharing power between regions

An interconnector is a high-capacity electricity link between regions or states. It lets surplus power flow to where it's needed (for example, Tasmanian hydro and wind supporting the mainland and mainland solar flowing back), so both sides need less backup generation. Modern interconnectors often bundle a **fibre-optic data cable** in the same route, carrying connectivity as well as electricity.

The example everyone's watching: Marinus Link

Marinus Link is a planned undersea and underground link between Tasmania and Victoria: around 255 km under Bass Strait and 90 km underground in Victoria, alongside supporting transmission in north-west Tasmania. Stage 1 (750 MW, roughly 1.5 times Basslink's capacity) reached its final investment decision in 2025, with construction starting from 2026 and operation targeted around 2030. A decision on a second 750 MW stage is expected from governments in 2026. (*Status current at July 2026.*)

Why communities are pushing back

Interconnectors are linear infrastructure: their impacts fall on the properties along the route, while benefits spread across whole states. Along Marinus and its supporting transmission, landholders and groups have raised real concerns: about compensation that ends after a set period while easements last forever, consultation felt to be late or pressured, effects on farmland and visual amenity and environmental impacts. These are legitimate planning matters and how a proponent responds to them is a good test of the project.

Who decides

Nationally: environmental approval (EPBC Act) and economic regulation of transmission (AER). **State:** planning and environmental assessment in each state crossed, plus land-access law. **Local:** councils on local planning matters. Landholders have specific legal rights around access and easements; see sheet 07 in this series.

What good practice looks like

- Routes chosen through genuine options assessment, shared with communities early.
- Compensation that reflects the permanent nature of easements, not just construction disruption.
- Consultation before decisions are fixed, with visible changes made in response.
- Benefits explained honestly: who gains, by how much and what it costs energy users.

Questions to ask

How was this route chosen and what alternatives were assessed? Does compensation last as long as the impact does? What binding commitments exist on rehabilitation and farmland reinstatement? How will the project report against its promises once built?

Want to know more? Your state planning authority, the AER and the proponent publish project detail; farming bodies and local councils are active voices on landholder issues. This sheet is general information, not legal or planning advice; a specific proposal is confirmed by qualified assessment.