



# MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 7 August 2019

## **Size of Essential Energy's senior management team grows, pay rates soar, while jobs of front-line workers slashed**

Essential Energy has been asked to urgently explain why the ranks of senior managers have swelled and their paypackets soared at the same time as the front-line workers who maintain the electricity poles and wires across 95 per cent of NSW have faced massive job cuts.

Analysis of the NSW Government-owned company's annual reports show that since 2015, the percentage of Essential Energy's total wages bill devoted to paying senior managers has jumped from 7.3 to 11 per cent.

In the most recent annual report, the publicly-owned company disclosed that the number of managers receiving a remuneration package equal to, or exceeding, the highest pay rate available to senior executives in NSW public service had increased by 14 to 152 in a single year.

The surge in management spending comes against a backdrop of massive cuts to front-line workers across regional NSW, with the total workforce of Essential Energy nearly halving since 2012.

Last month, the company announced it was axing another 182 regional jobs, while an internal Essential Energy document has revealed that management plans to slash one in every five regional positions by 2024, resulting in another 500 workers losing their jobs.

The Electrical Trades Union has written to Essential Energy CEO John Cleland seeking an urgent explanation as to why senior manager numbers have continued to grow while so many front-line workers have lost their jobs.

"Essential Energy repeatedly claim their hands are tied, that these job cuts have been forced on them, yet the continued growth in the number of senior managers and how much they are being paid shows the pain of job cuts has been disproportionately felt by front-line workers," ETU Secretary Justin Page said.

"When the percentage of total remuneration costs devoted to paying a small band of senior managers jumps from 7.3 to 11 per cent in just a few short years, it says there's something serious out of whack.

"I can guarantee that the residents and businesses across 95 per cent of NSW who rely on Essential Energy to keep the lights on would rather see more of this money spent on maintaining front-line services, rather than lining the pockets of a growing band of senior managers.

"The ETU has written to Essential Energy seeking an urgent explanation as to how they justify such a substantial increase to the number and pay of senior managers over a period where approximately 2000 jobs have been lost.

"We have also asked how many of the recently announced job cuts will involve senior managers on these top pay rates.

"Our members have been working hard to identify possible cost saving and alternatives to job cuts, so it is extremely disheartening to see those efforts squandered by the continued growth of a bloated senior management team."

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