

**Submission
No 62**

**INQUIRY INTO FEASIBILITY OF UNDERGROUNDING
THE TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE FOR
RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS**

Name: Mr Russell Erwin

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Russell Erwin,

Attention: The Hon. Emily Suvall MLC.,
Committee Chair,
Inquiry into the Feasibility of Undergrounding the Transmission Infrastructure for Renewable Energy
Projects
Standing Committee on State Development,
Parliament House,
6 Macquarie St., Sydney, NSW 2000

Dear Ms Suvall,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to your committee on this most important
issue, *Transmission Infrastructure for Renewable Energy Projects*.

Submission

At the outset I express the hope and expectation that this inquiry is genuine and not simply a public
relations exercise whereby it can be said that “genuine consultation had been sought from the
community”, when in fact the decision-making process rolls on regardless of what the community
might express.

While I speak as one most immediately affected by the proposed scheme, I am not blind to the
necessity for a reliable source of power to replace the existing sources.
However, we must not continue a scheme simply because it can be simplistically presented as being
financially sound, when in fact, after all elements are truthfully considered, it will be seen to have far-
reaching consequences for the whole community for generations.
The need to get our power generation and transmission system right is acute. The scheme we
introduce will have generations-long consequences. It is vital to get it right now. Because of its
urgency we might be tempted into throwing together something out of what has worked and hope
for the best. This is not good enough. We are at a pivot-point. We cannot afford to settle for solutions
no longer appropriate to the 21st century world.

You will be aware from all the submissions presented of the numerous reasons why individuals and
communities are incensed by proposals such as TransGrid’s to erect, in the first instance, a
transmission line from Maragle to Bannaby. You may or may not be aware of the depth and heat of
anger at the insouciance with which we have been treated: the community consultative meetings
which simply spout the “company line”, treating the issue as a fait accompli and paying lip-service to
people’s heartfelt concerns. This, however, maybe viewed as just a matter of community relations.
But as expanding urbanisation and decentralisation continues apace politicians would do well to pay
heed to community concerns and expectations even in once-sleepy rural areas such as in the
Southern Tablelands.

And the substantive issues at the heart of community distress still have not been addressed. And they must be. For an issue of this gravity and significance, political expedience must not be the benchmark.

It makes no sense to destroy for generations landscapes and the lives of those who live in them, for the illusion of economic rationality, simplistically calculated when there is a safer, less destructive, and more environmentally sensitive solution available.

Do not allow the opportunity to employ the better solution, for which future generations will be grateful, to lapse in favour of the politically expedient, short-term, and simplistic solution presented by the OH transmission lines.

Yours sincerely,

Russell Erwin