

Submission
No 113

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

Organisation: Iberdrola Australia Networks

Date Received: 14 July 2023

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The Hon. Emily Jane Suvaal MLC

Chair, Legislative Council Standing Committee on State Development

NSW Parliament

Via: [Lodge a Submission \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/submit)

Dear Committee Chair,

Parliamentary Inquiry into the feasibility of undergrounding transmission infrastructure

Iberdrola welcomes the opportunity to provide some insights on the option of undergrounding new transmission lines in NSW.

The Iberdrola group has become one of the leaders in the Australian renewable energy market after acquiring Infigen Energy in 2020. The company operates more than 800 MW of solar, wind and storage batteries in Australia and has a significant portfolio of projects, of which 453 MW are under construction and more than 1,000 MWs in various stages of development.

Iberdrola is also recognised globally by its experience building, operating and maintaining electricity transmission lines, substations, transformation centres and other infrastructures to transfer electrical power from the production centres to the end user across jurisdictions in Spain, UK, US and Brazil. Iberdrola currently operates more than 1.2 million kilometres of distribution and transmission power lines and more than 4,400 substations, which carries electricity to more than 34 million people around the planet. Forty percent of the Iberdrola group's organic investment for the period 2020-2025 (more than €27 billion) will be used to expand Iberdrola's networks. Iberdrola is actively looking to roll-out these capabilities in country, demonstrating its full commitment to Australia's energy transition.

According to the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO's) 2022 Integrated System Plan, 10,000kms of transmission lines will need to be built within the next decade to connect renewable generation to replace the retiring coal fire generators currently operating in the National Electricity Market today. As expansions to the power system on this scale have not occurred in over fifty years, it is necessary to build these transmission lines in a timely, cost effective and environmentally responsible manner that is also acceptable to communities that live with these transmission lines on or near their properties.

Iberdrola firmly believes that new transmission lines and the addition of renewable generation to replace retiring coal fire generation, is critical to achieve Australia's net zero emissions targets. Iberdrola believes that renewable connections will only occur if new transmission lines to host the renewable connections are built. These transmissions lines will only be built if the community is engaged and happy to host these transmission lines on their properties.

It is crucial for the NSW Government to investigate the concerns being raised by communities in NSW regarding the environmental, agricultural impacts of hosting transmission lines on their properties. As such, Iberdrola has attached some information that will hopefully assist the NSW Government with its inquiry into undergrounding transmission lines.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the feasibility of undergrounding transmission lines. If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this submission, please contact
via email at .

Yours sincerely,