

**Submission
No 178**

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

Name: Mr Christopher Kingwill

Date Received: 14 July 2023

Dear Committee,

HumeLink will inflict untold damage to our precious wildlife and increase greenhouse gases

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this important inquiry into the feasibility of undergrounding transmission infrastructure for renewable infrastructure projects.

This inquiry represents an opportunity to ensure better outcomes for future generations of NSW citizens and our precious wildlife.

Executive Summary

Key facts

- HumeLink has an action area of 5,714 hectares including clear-felling areas of native forests and bushland with serious impacts on habitat, greenhouse gases and global warming (Transgrid's per the referral to EPBC Act).
- HumeLink will devastate habitats and wildlife corridors for more than 80 threatened or endangered species of flora and fauna
- HumeLink towers will worsen greenhouse gas emissions through large-scale land clearing and increased risk of bushfires

Ironically, multi-billion-dollar transmission projects being carried out in the name of the environment to reduce global warming are now threatening to inflict untold damage to our precious native animals and plants through massive land clearing, destruction of wildlife corridors and increasing the risk of deadly bushfires.

Dear Committee,

HumeLink fails NSW and regional communities with flawed, short-term economics

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this important inquiry into the feasibility of undergrounding transmission infrastructure for renewable infrastructure projects. This inquiry represents a once-in-lifetime opportunity to ensure better social and economic outcomes for regional communities and the State.

Key facts

- Compared with undergrounding, the proposed HumeLink are inefficient, leak energy, require ongoing maintenance and are prone to blackouts
- The project fails to assess the impact on key local industries such as tourism and agriculture
- The towers represent a real and present danger by increasing the region's risk of bushfire
- The only winner with HumeLink is foreign-owned Transgrid which will see a 40% jump in revenue

Executive Summary

As NSW and Australia move to a renewable energy future, it is critical that we build sustainable, efficient infrastructure based on proper planning, not flawed economic modelling and short-term thinking.

Dear Committee,

Underground to avoid building a multibillion-dollar firetrap through NSW communities

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this necessary inquiry into the feasibility of undergrounding transmission infrastructure for renewable infrastructure projects. Your deliberations and recommendations on this issue represent a once-in-lifetime opportunity to ensure better outcomes for future generations of NSW citizens.

Executive summary:

Key points

- Outdated transmission tower technology significantly increases the risk of deadly bushfires and makes it harder to fight them, threatening lives, property and native animals
- HumeLink cuts through large areas still recovering from the 'Black Sunday' bushfires of 2019-20
- Bushfire risk will increase with Climate Change, making towers and lines even more dangerous
- PG&E's modelling in California shows undergrounding lines reduces their risk of igniting wildfires by approximately 99 percent
- The cost of bushfires in Australia can run into billions of dollars and will be well in excess of the cost associated with undergrounding

There is no doubt that Transgrid's current HumeLink proposal for high voltage overhead transmission towers from Wagga Wagga and the Snowy Mountains to the outskirts of the Southern Highlands will make fire-prone southern NSW even more susceptible to devastating bushfires.

| Suppose the project goes ahead in its current form.