

**Submission
No 200**

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

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Submission for the feasibility of undergrounding transmission infrastructure for renewable energy projects.

I believe the Transmission lines should be placed underground because this will:

- Reduce the visual impact of the transmission lines.
- Allow the transmission lines to follow existing transmission line corridors, rather than create new corridors.
- Reduce the fire risks, especially in areas where there are properties serviced by dead end roads. During the bush fire inquiry into the 2019/20 bush fires one road in and one road out was seen as a major issue for residents.

o EnergyCo, TransGrid and other transmission line providers will tell you the transmission line do not cause fires, they do I have seen it when apparently a dust build up on the insulators ignited, dropping burning material to the ground and igniting the vegetation below. Flocks of birds can also cause arcing between the lines with the burning birds falling to the ground.

- Minimise the environmental impacts, the easements will not need to be continually slashed and there will be no impact on the fauna in the area.

I am concerned the inquiry is a publicity exercise being conducted by the Government with the findings indicating the transmission lines cannot be placed underground.

My concerns are based around comments made by EnergyCo representatives at a community information session held in Scone on June 29, 2023. The information session was held regarding the 500KV transmission line and corridor EnergyCo are planning to build, linking the New England Renewable Energy Zone to the Bayswater Liddell power station sites near Muswellbrook. There has been a lot of angst amongst the community concerning the proposal, EnergyCo have nominated a new transmission line corridor rather than follow the existing transmission line corridors. The transmission line will be mounted on 80m tall towers running through the pristine Upper Hunter landscape along elevated routes.

During the meeting I asked why the transmission line could not be buried and an inquiry had been organised by the NSW Government, with the inquiry instigated by Minister Penny Sharpe.

The response from the EnergyCo representatives at the meeting was astounding they said the inquiry wouldn't hold up, they would never bury the cables for any transmission lines and there were derogatory comments made about the inquiry and Minister Sharpe. They indicated the inquiry was a sham, and the Government knows the transmission lines will never be buried.

After hearing these comments, I would like to know if the inquiry is as suggested at the meeting, just a method for the Minns Labor Government to placate the families and communities who will be impacted by the arial transmission lines by finding the lines cannot be buried. Or will the inquiry result in the transmission lines being buried.

I am also concerned that EnergyCo will make submissions to the inquiry indicating the transmission lines can not be placed underground and their submissions may be supported by the NSW DPIE. This will give the illusion there are two Government departments indicating the transmission lines cannot be placed underground. When in fact EnergyCo comes under the umbrella of the NSW DPIE.