

**Submission
No 242**

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

Name: Ms Amy Wyer

Date Received: 14 July 2023

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The Hon Emily Suvaal, Committee Chair,
Inquiry - Feasibility of undergrounding the transmission infrastructure for renewable energy projects
Standing Committee on State Development
Parliament House
6 Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

14 July 2023

Dear The Hon Emily Suvaal MLC,

Re: Feasibility of undergrounding the transmission infrastructure for renewable energy projects

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this inquiry into the feasibility of undergrounding transmission infrastructure for renewable energy projects. I am an affected resident in the Yass Valley Shire and appreciate this opportunity to voice my concerns.

There are many issues associated with overhead transmission lines that are worth noting in this submission. These issues include impacts on our agricultural operations, increased risks associated with bushfires, destruction of our environments, well establish treelines and pastures, visual pollution, infrastructure inefficiency, and potential biosecurity risks. I'm confident, however, that you will have received plenty of feedback and information on these topics.

The topic that I will endeavour to expand on for you is that of mental health.

For a nation that takes the subject of mental health extremely seriously, it is hard to believe that a foreign owned company has been allowed to continue this project in the bullish manner that it has.

Calling it consultation, they have walked into communities and onto landholders' properties with little compassion and a sense that they're invincible. They deliver shattering news of a project that makes little sense to many, yet seems to be very tightly set in stone – other options are labelled as not feasible. They successfully move through the process with lingering threats of compulsory acquisition and timeframes. Leaving those affected with information that is often out of their depth, hard to process and even harder to navigate through the many consultants awaiting them.

The one thing that is meant to be your safe place, your security, your haven – your home – is suddenly no longer in your control.

The topic is quickly brushed aside with offers of mental health services and potential compensation. Those affected by these projects head down the rabbit hole of a now 3 year journey towards the unknown. Feeling unsure about the future of their property, their financial situation and in some cases, their living arrangements.

It must be noted that the sleepless nights, the time spent worrying, and the moments lost can not be compensated. These projects are absorbing years of peoples lives and many of their resources.

People are donating time and personal funds to fight this. The NSW government is not paying for this fight.

Without crying poor, in the last 5 years rural landholders and communities have been through drought, floods and a pandemic. Animal health concerns also loom on the horizon and threaten agricultural operations should disease enter the country.

Rural and regional areas should not have to fight for a fair battle here. They should be given more support. They should be heard. If there is a feasible alternative to overhead transmission, it should be considered. But assessing the feasibility depends on accurately accounting for the costs.

I ask that the Standing Committee consider the community and social costs of this project when assessing the feasibility of underground transmission and hope that, as a result, you will recommend that Humelink be placed underground.

Let's sink Humelink.

Kind regards,

Amy Wyer