

**Submission
No 59**

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

Name: Ms Robin Quilty
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The Director,
Select Committee on the Feasibility of Undergrounding
Infrastructure for Renewable Energy Projects,
Parliament House,
Macquarie Street,
SYDNEY NSW 2000

4th November 2023

Dear Director,

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

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this inquiry. I write this submission to reiterate my support for undergrounding transmission infrastructure and I refer the committee to my initial submission to this inquiry when the parliamentarians also visited our property, the second stop on the way to Tumut.

I am a farmer grazing cattle and sheep for wool and meat. We already have a 330 kv power line with 10 towers, running through the centre of our land and 400 m from our kitchen window, with 2 more right beside our boundary fence. The proposed power line/s is/are planned to run beside the present line with towers 3 times as tall as the present ones and possibly even closer to where we live. We are being asked to farm under and around these lines despite health hazards to us and our livestock, and to watch further erosion of our fragile soils and pollution of all our waterways. We have to fight fires under them with no help from anybody else as nobody else will risk their lives near these powerlines during fires and the other so-called "firefighters" will wait until the conflagrations come out of our area in which case they will be unstoppable, as was the case in the 2019-20 Dunn's Road fire.

After reviewing Transgrid's Humelink EIS, I ask that the below points are considered in addition to my initial submission.

Overseas countries are now using best practice for installing new powerlines by putting them underground and some are even dismantling overhead structures and replacing them with underground cables. These overseas governments have factored in the costs of lives lost in fires, communities destroyed, agricultural assets lost, native assets lost and trauma suffered by so many people and realise that undergrounding will save untold billions of dollars which will be spent to try

to replace the irreplaceable, which have not been factored into the cost of the over head lines at present.

Experts on transmission lines have shown the costs of building towers and lines have been misrepresented by Transgrid and the lobbies behind them, and it seems the costing of the overhead powerlines was done on faulty information and if done honestly/with integrity is no cheaper in monetary terms than the underground lines which would be so much better for the people of Australia and our environment. In actual fact undergrounding is much cheaper when factoring in consequent costs of future damage caused by the overhead transmission structures.

If we lose our farming capabilities we lose the ability to be able to feed Australians and other people in this world of exploding populations.

The cost of undergrounding has been shown to cost 1.5 times of overhead lines and maintenance costs of undergrounding to be so much less than maintenance for overhead lines that it is ludicrous to even consider overhead lines when all relevant factors and consequences have been taken into account.

In order to minimise the above impacts, I urge the Standing Committee to recommend undergrounding HumeLink.

Yours sincerely,

Robin Quilty