

**27 June 2006**

## **Media Release**

### **80 submissions on draft decision for proposed Auckland 400kV**

The Electricity Commission has received more than 80 submissions on its draft decision about national grid operator Transpower's proposed Whakamaru-Otahuhu 400kV transmission line. The submissions are on the commission's website at:

<http://www.electricitycommission.govt.nz/submissions/substransmission/draftdecision>

The commission turned down Transpower's proposed Whakamaru-Otahuhu 400kV line in its draft decision on 27 April 2006 on the grounds that it did not appear to meet the Grid Investment Test (GIT) in the Electricity Governance Rules and that there were cheaper alternatives that appeared to be just as reliable.

Interested parties had until 23 June 2006 to submit papers on the draft decision for consideration before the commission's final decision in July 2006. On 31 May 2006, Transpower indicated to the Commission it would issue an amended proposal.

"The commission decided to continue to seek comments on aspects of its draft decision. This information will still be important for our consideration of a new or amended proposal from Transpower," chair Roy Hemmingway said. Once a proposal is received from Transpower, it will be possible to advise stakeholders about the steps required to reach a decision.

The particular aspects for which the commission invited comment included the four alternatives to Transpower's proposal set out in the draft decision; the

idea of Transpower acquiring a corridor through the Waikato to South Auckland in advance of the need for new transmission; and the commission's draft decision on Transpower's proposal including application of the GIT.

As the electricity industry regulator, the commission's highest priority is to ensure a robust and secure electricity supply to Auckland and wider New Zealand over the long-term. "In the past year we have considered and approved some \$232 million of proposed expenditure by Transpower for upgrading sections of the grid throughout New Zealand, including around Auckland and in the upper South Island. The commission is also likely to approve another \$16.5 million for upgrade work, subject to consultation" said Mr Hemmingway.

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For more information:

Roy Hemmingway  
Chair  
Electricity Commission  
Tel: 04 460 8860