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Media Release

Auckland Grid Upgrade Draft Decision Deferred

The Electricity Commission has decided not to issue a draft decision on Transpower's proposal for an upgrade of the national transmission line into Auckland before the end of the year. Instead, the draft decision will now be released at the end of January.

Commission Deputy Chair Peter Harris said that issuing a draft decision by the end of the year was a "best endeavours" target and was always going to be tight.

"As it turned out, there are a number of details that we have not been able to fully work through and reconcile. We reiterate that the fundamental consideration is that the supply of electricity into Auckland is reliable and robust.

"We are still working though a small number of reliability, strategic and competition issues, but felt that it would not be good practice to rush consideration of them to meet an arbitrary decision timeline.

As provided for in the Rules, we will ask questions of Transpower and seek further information from them as we work through these issues.

"More work will be done during January, and the Commission is scheduled to meet next on 30 and 31 January 2007, when a draft decision will be made.

"Because this is a regulatory process, no further comment will be made on issues under consideration or on the nature of our deliberations" Mr Harris said.

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