

## **Media release**

**1 June 2006**

### **Commission suspends grid upgrade consultation**

Today the Electricity Commission suspended consideration of Transpower's proposal for a 400 kilovolt line between Whakamaru and Auckland. The commission's action is in response to a request yesterday from Transpower, which intends to work on a new proposal for the commission to consider at a future date. The commission has not yet received a new proposal from Transpower.

The commission issued a draft decision on 27 April 2006 turning down Transpower's proposal for the Whakamaru to Auckland line. The commission has been consulting on that draft decision, and submissions were due by 9 June 2006.

The commission has cancelled the public hearings that were scheduled for 1 and 2 June 2006. In light of suspending consideration of Transpower's current proposal, the commission has also cancelled the public conference on 6 and 7 July 2006.

However, the commission will continue to seek comments on aspects of its draft decision.

"While we are no longer officially consulting on the draft decision, electricity security for Auckland is a very high priority for the commission, and we will be actively considering any such information put to us through the comment process," said Mr Hemmingway.

“We believe that the comments we receive on the suspended draft decision will be important for our consideration of any new proposal,” he said.

Therefore, the commission is seeking comment until 23 June 2006 from any interested party, in particular on:

- the four alternatives to Transpower’s proposal that are set out in the commission’s draft decision;
- the idea raised in the draft decision on the possibility of Transpower acquiring a corridor through the Waikato to South Auckland in advance of need for new transmission; and
- the commission’s draft decision on Transpower’s proposal, including application of the Grid Investment Test (if submitters wish to comment).

“We will consult with Transpower over the timetable for its submission of any new grid proposal and for commission consideration and decisions,” Mr Hemmingway said. “The commission will consult the public and the electricity industry on Transpower’s new proposal and the commission’s assessment of it before making its decision on any new proposal.”

For more information:

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