

## Summary Statement of Dougall Campbell for Transpower New Zealand Limited

My evidence in relation to Hearing Stream 3 – Rural Environment sets out Transpower’s approach to Implementation of the National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission (**NPSET**). Transpower’s approach to NPSET implementation is to ensure that we only seek the minimum District Plan restrictions necessary to give effect to the NPSET. The provisions proposed allow Transpower to effectively and efficiently carry out its work and for the safety, health and wellbeing of the Central Hawke’s Bay community and New Zealand as a whole. This approach has also been developed over time, including through numerous site visits facilitated in both rural and urban settings.

Transpower considers that the amendments and additions set out in Ms Whitney’s evidence will best give effect to the objective and policies of the NPSET. The provisions are generally consistent with those Transpower seeks elsewhere around New Zealand and are considered necessary.

I concur with the amendments sought in Ms Whitney’s evidence.

### NPSET

Transpower supports the approach to give effect to the NPSET by including buffer areas/corridors and setbacks around the National Grid in the district plans. These are necessary to:

- manage **reverse sensitivity** effects;
- ensure the National Grid can be efficiently operated, maintained, developed and upgraded by providing the **working and access space** to do this;
- ensure **sensitive activities** are generally not provided for near the National Grid; and
- protect the **safety** of both the National Grid and people working or living close to it.

### Reverse Sensitivity

Transpower experiences a range of reverse sensitivity effects from those who carry out activities or wish to develop land near its assets. These complaints are, for instance, about visual or noise effects or effects on agricultural operations. A particular focus is also on restricting sensitive activities within proximity of the assets given the increased exposure and electrical hazard risk such activities are subject to and increased risk of harm and incidents. Restriction of sensitive and incompatible development near the lines will reduce the likelihood of reverse sensitivity effects, harm to people, as well ensuring security of supply. In addition to the health and safety risks of activities occurring near the National Grid assets, activities can also directly compromise the ability for Transpower to operate, maintain and upgrade its assets through restricting access or adverse effects on the National Grid assets themselves.

Examples of reverse sensitivity effects include requests for:

- conductors to be raised, to allow fruit trees to grow higher (and cherry pickers to be used) beneath them;
- lines to be placed underground, to reduce visual impacts;
- a tower to be raised and a new tower erected to allow for commercial bulk building development to occur under a line; and
- poles to be increased in height to allow earthworks and driveway access to a new dwelling;

Reverse sensitivity effects are one of the key reasons why Transpower seeks greater regulation through appropriate plan provisions and controls as a preventative and proactive approach.

#### **NZEC34**

NZEC34:2001 provides minimum separation distances required to manage electrical hazards for the entire electrical industry. NZEC34:2001 seeks to protect persons, property, vehicles and mobile plant from harm or damage from electrical safety hazards by setting out minimum safe electrical distances.

Transpower's approach is to seek corridor and yard provisions in the District Plan, these go beyond compliance with NZEC34:2001. However, this Code of Practice made under the Electricity Act and Regulations, relates to electrical safe distances - it does not address the resource management matters in Policies 10 and 11 of the NPSET. Transpower does not support simple reliance upon NZEC34:2001. NZEC34:2001 will not ensure the National Grid infrastructure and surrounding land are proactively and sustainably managed for the future. prevent any instances arising.

Transpower notes that some members of the public and interest groups around the country have asserted that compliance with NZEC34:2001 should be enough to ensure the safe and efficient use of land near the National Grid. However, those assertions are incorrect. This is because they fail to acknowledge the range of electricity transmission issues covered by the NPSET. For example, NZEC34:2001 does not address the other electrical safety hazards and the potential effects of the lines on activities near them.

Further, NZECP34:2001 does not protect the integrity of the National Grid from the effects of other activities. For example, it does not restrict the subdivision of land near the lines, and it allows underbuilding. In addition, NZECP34:2001 does not distinguish between sensitive and non-sensitive activities, and therefore it does not prevent the types of inappropriate development contemplated by the NPSET from occurring.

To emphasise the point, NZECP34:2001 does not consider the environmental effects of activities on the National Grid, or the potential environmental effects of the National Grid on third party activities.

The National Grid Yard and Corridor provisions sought by Transpower will not replace the requirement to comply with NZECP34:2001; nor will these provisions eliminate all risks. The provisions sought will reduce risks, but anyone near the National Grid needs to be continually alert to the hazards associated with this infrastructure.

### **Conclusion**

The changes proposed by Transpower reflect Transpower's approach to NPSET implementation as the most effective means of giving effect to the NPSET. Particularly the NPSET's objective of managing the adverse effects of the network, and managing the adverse effects of other activities on the network, and provision as permitted activities for certain activities which do not compromise the ongoing operation, maintenance development and upgrade of the National Grid.