



Appendix D

Consultation Report



Report

Dumaresq to Lismore 330kV Transmission Line Community and Stakeholder Consultation Report

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Prepared for
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Introduction

1.1 Project Background

TransGrid is the owner, operator and manager of the largest high voltage transmission network in Australia, connecting generators, distributors and major end users in New South Wales. The population of far northern New South Wales is expected to grow by at least 23 per cent, or around 60,000 people by 2031. Peak demand for electricity in the region is expected to grow by more than 40 per cent over the next 10 years, which is significantly higher than the New South Wales average. To meet the increasing demand, TransGrid plans to invest \$227 million into the electricity network in far northern New South Wales.

TransGrid is proposing to construct a 205km 330kV transmission line between existing substations located near Bonshaw and Lismore. The transmission line is required to improve the reliability of electricity supply to far northern New South Wales. **Chapter 1 Introduction** of the Environmental Assessment provides an outline of the project along with a table which provides a summary of the terms used throughout the EA (including this Report) along with a description of the areas and activities to which they refer.

1.2 Project Context

A decade ago, TransGrid announced in Annual Planning Statements (1999-2001) and Annual Planning Reports (2002-2009) that due to the high demand growth in the far north of NSW it would be necessary to reinforce the transmission network.

In 1999, six potential options were listed for meeting this need including several transmission line alternatives (network alternatives), local generation and alternative energy saving arrangements (non-network solutions). In 2003 TransGrid also published the document 'Emerging Transmission Network Limitations on the New South Wales Far North Coast'.

In 2006, a study was undertaken to investigate the feasibility of securing a transmission line route between Dumaresq Switching Station and Tenterfield. The Feasibility Study was undertaken by Connell Wagner Pty Ltd and comprised a desk-based investigation at a regional level to determine potential line options. The Feasibility Study focused on the Dumaresq to Tenterfield portion of the Study Area. The Study concluded that a feasible transmission line route exists between Dumaresq Substation and the Tenterfield Substation or a nominated connection point along the existing Lismore – Tenterfield 132kV line route.

Consistent with the National Electricity Rules, TransGrid has consulted with the market and undertaken a regulatory consultation process. TransGrid issued an 'Application Notice' in April 2008, which invited industry participants to propose alternative solutions to meet growing energy demand in the region. The consultation process sought submissions on alternative proposals such as local generation and demand management alternatives.

TransGrid's Final Report (March 2009) is an analysis considering both network (transmission line) solutions and non network alternatives (such as demand management and embedded generation). That report concluded that the proposed transmission line upgrade is the best option to maintain current levels of electricity reliability on the Far North Coast.

In 2009, the Feasibility Study was reviewed. Further desk-based assessment was undertaken along with field studies, route investigations and ongoing consultation with government agencies and the community. Constraints mapping, route investigations and consultation identified a Study Area (refer

1 Introduction

Chapter 1 Introduction) for a new line between Dumaresq Switching Station and Tenterfield (Study Area West) whilst the Tenterfield to Lismore section of the line will utilise the existing, but widened 132kV easement (Study Area East). A preferred corridor was identified and announced in September 2009. Following further environmental and design studies, an alignment within the preferred corridor has been identified and is the subject of the Environmental Assessment (EA) which this Report accompanies.

The purpose of this Report is to present the consultation program which has been implemented as part of the Project, to identify the key issues raised by government agencies and the community, and to outline how these issues have been incorporated into the identification and refinement of the Study Area, the preferred corridor, and the proposed alignment and associated easement.

1.3 Purpose of Stakeholder Consultation

The purpose of the stakeholder consultation program was to assist TransGrid and URS in selecting a transmission line route that will be accepted by the local community, government agencies, transmission line authorities and other stakeholders as the best overall social, environmental, technical and economic option available.

The specific aims of the consultation program involved promoting awareness of the project and gathering important local knowledge about the area and what is important to the local community. This is based on recognition that local residents and key stakeholders have intimate knowledge of local issues. The consultation program aims to identify these key issues.

Consultation with lot holders increased as part of the development of an alignment during September 2009 to October 2010. The specific objectives of the consultation program included:

- identifying key issues for selection of the transmission line route;
- providing input to the design in what is acceptable to the local community, government agencies, authorities and other stakeholders; and
- promoting awareness of the project and gathering important local knowledge about the area and what is important to the local community.

Stakeholder Consultation

2.1 Introduction

The Director General's Requirements dictate that in order to undertake a comprehensive EA of the proposed Far North NSW (Dumaresq to Lismore 330kV Transmission Line) Project, appropriate emphasis needs to be placed on those issues of greatest significance to the local environment, affected and neighbouring lot holders and the wider community. To ensure this has occurred, a program of community and government agency consultation, preliminary environmental studies and review of the literature was undertaken to identify relevant environmental issues and potential impacts.

The key objectives of the consultation program were to ensure key stakeholders were:

- appropriately informed of the project parameters;
- aware of the approval process;
- provided with an opportunity to ask questions and to identify areas of concern with respect to the project; and
- provided with an opportunity to provide feedback to assist in the identification of key environmental and community issues.

2.2 Consultation Activities: Community Consultation

A range of consultation activities were implemented in order to present information to the community on the need for the transmission line, the history of the project and the process to be undertaken in order to identify a preferred route. This section provides an outline of the key activities undertaken.

Letters to Lot Holders

- Initial letters were mailed to lot holders in the Study Area (8 April 2009).
- Letters were mailed to lot holders requesting one-on-one meetings (19 May 2009).
- Letters were mailed to lot holders in the expanded Study Area (Mole River & Northern Tenterfield) (22 July 2009).
- Preferred corridor letters were mailed to 'affected' and 'no longer affected' lot holders (October 2009).

The initial mail out consisted of 290 letters sent to lot holders within the nominated study area between Dumaresq Switching Station and Lismore Substation (refer to **Appendix B Constraints Identification Report**). The letter outlined the project and indicated that TransGrid would be in contact in the following weeks to seek input into the ongoing studies. It also provided the toll free 1800 number for lot holders to contact to ask questions regarding the project. Twenty-five letters were mailed to lot holders who had requested one-on-one meetings with TransGrid.

The second round of letters to lot holders consisted of 50 letters sent to potentially affected lot holders within the expanded study area. This letter outlined the project and the reason for the expanded Study Area and gave notice of public information sessions that TransGrid would be holding in the area the following week. A Project Update brochure was included with the letter.

The 'Preferred Corridor' mail out consisted of 189 letters to lot holders identified as being within the Preferred Corridor and 148 letters notifying lot holders that they were no longer potentially affected by the proposed transmission line. Maps showing the Preferred Corridor and easement and compensation information brochures were included.

A copy of these letters is provided in **Appendix A - Consultation material**.

2 Stakeholder Consultation

Project Update Newsletter

- A project update in the form of a newsletter was mailed out to all lot holders within the Study Area (19 May 2009).
- A second project update was mailed out to lot holders in the Study Area and expanded Study Area (22 July 2009).
- A third project update was mailed to lot holders within the preferred corridor along with registered interested parties (December 2009).
- A fourth project update was mailed out to lot holders within the preferred corridor along with registered interested parties (May 2010).
- A fifth project update was mailed out to lot holders within the preferred corridor along with registered interested parties (June 2010).
- A sixth project update was mailed out to lot holders within the preferred corridor along with registered interested parties (September 2010).

A copy of the project update newsletters is provided in **Appendix A - Consultation material**.

1800 Number

A 1800 number was established and advertised so that additional information could be provided to the community. As of 19th October 2010, a total of 214 calls have been logged via the 1800 number (refer to **Section 2.3**).

Media Releases

To keep the media and public informed regarding its activities, TransGrid regularly submits media releases. Media releases to date in regard to the Project are listed below:

- 'TransGrid Announces Plans for Essential Power Upgrade in Far North NSW': announcement of plans to invest \$227 million into the electricity network in Far North NSW, to meet reliability needs and address increasing electricity demand (20 March 2009).
- 'TransGrid Listens To Community Concerns': article reporting on community meeting held in Tenterfield on 13 June 2009 (15 June 2009).
- 'Far North NSW Project Will Reduce NSW Energy Loss' – article reporting TransGrid's Far North NSW Project will save over 33,000 tonnes of CO₂ every year due to increased efficiency of the network (6 July 2009).
- 'TransGrid asks the community for input on two additional study areas' – media release also announcing the upcoming community information sessions to be held in August (21 July 2009).
- 'TransGrid receives valuable community feedback' – media release recounting the information sessions held in Mingoola Hall and Tenterfield RSL pavilion (30 July 2009).
- 'TransGrid to hold additional information sessions following community interest' – media release informing the Tenterfield community of further opportunities to comment on the Project between the 4-6th August (31 July 2009).
- 'Preferred Corridor Selected for Far North NSW Project': announcement of selection of preferred corridor for the proposed power line to connect Dumaresq (Bonshaw) and Lismore Substations (30 September 2009).
- 'TransGrid welcomes major gas deposit discovery': an announcement advising that TransGrid, the NSW transmission network operator, welcomed the discovery of a major gas deposit in Casino by Metgasco. Despite the discovery of the major gas deposit, TransGrid will be continuing to progress

its Far North NSW Transmission Line Project in order to meet rising energy demand on the Far North Coast forecast by 2012 (3 December 2009).

- 'TransGrid seeks network support for NSW Far North Coast Region': announcement of the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking non-network solutions to meet peak demand in the Far North Coast region of NSW in the short term (21 May 2010).

Examples of these media releases are provided in **Appendix A - Consultation material**.

Examples of media statements issued to date include:

- 'Update: TransGrid's Far North NSW Project': provided an outline of the plan to upgrade the existing transmission line between Tenterfield and Lismore, and to build a new line between Bonshaw and Tenterfield. This update outlined that environmental studies are being conducted, a route for the line has not yet been selected and that affected landholders will be compensated. It also encouraged members of the public to visit the TransGrid website and displays (27 April 2009).
- 'Update: TransGrid's Far North NSW Project': reinforced that the project is in its preliminary stage and no alignment has been decided. This media update also directed people to recently uploaded satellite images showing a more detailed view of the study area on the TransGrid Website (11 May 2009).
- 'Far North NSW Project Update': stated that TransGrid is in the process are considering route options, and asked for feedback from community members. The update included the TransGrid hotline number where enquiries and feedback could be directed (21 May 2009).

TransGrid Website

A Project website was established in 2009 and includes background information and an explanation of the need for, and benefits of, the Project. The website contains public documents relating to the proposal, aerial imagery to view and contact information such as the 1800 number and designated email address (with an option to subscribe to regular feeds). The website will remain accessible until construction of the Project is complete and can be accessed at the following address:

http://www.transgrid.com.au/projects/projects/dumaresq_lismore/Pages/default.aspx

Newspaper Advertisements

Advertisements regarding consultation venues, project information and the RfP were advertised in local papers, including:

- Tenterfield Star (April, May, June, July 2009 and March 2010);
- Southern Free Times (April, May, June, July 2009 and March 2010);
- Northern Star (April, May, June, July 2009);
- Northern Rivers Echo (March 2010);
- Daily Examiner (May 2010);
- Coffs Coast Advocate (May 2010);
- Don Dorriggo Gazette (May 2010); and
- The Sydney Morning Herald (May 2010).

Examples of the advertisements are provided in **Appendix A - Consultation material**.

2 Stakeholder Consultation

Public displays

Fixed display sites were established and the project update newsletters, feedback forms and two maps showing the study area were provided for display along with CDs containing high resolution maps for community members requiring more detailed images. The fixed displays were set up at Lismore, Kyogle, Richmond Valley, Tenterfield and Inverell Councils.

Fixed display material was set up from 18 May 2009 with a second set of material set up from 23 July 2009, coinciding with the announcement of the expanded study areas, and a third set of material was set up in October 2009 coinciding with announcement of the preferred corridor.

Examples of the project update newsletters and feedback forms are provided in **Appendix A - Consultation material.**

Public Information Sessions

There have been eight public information sessions held to date to provide an opportunity for the community to meet with the team, discuss the project and provide the team with local information and feedback. The information sessions were held at readily accessible locations in proximity to the study area. Information sessions venues included community halls in Mingoola, Tenterfield, Drake and Casino. These sessions were generally half days between 3:00pm and 7:00pm, however, the first of these information sessions held in Tenterfield in June was 9:00am to 1:00pm. The dates of the information sessions are as follows:

- Tenterfield Memorial Hall (13 June 2009).
- Mingoola Hall (28 July 2009).
- Tenterfield RSL Pavilion (29 July 2009).
- Drake Community Hall (30 July 2009).
- Casino Civic Hall (30 July 2009).
- Tenterfield RSL Pavilion (4, 5, 6 August 2009).

The initial public information session was held in Tenterfield on 13 June 2009 providing potentially affected lot holders and the general community with information on the proposal. This session included a question and answer session prior to, and after a formal presentation by TransGrid. This meeting included representatives from both TransGrid and URS. There were approximately 150 – 200 community members in attendance.

Public information sessions held between 28 and 30 July 2009 included the team attending four locations (Mingoola, Tenterfield, Drake and Casino). These were half day sessions where the public could attend and have their questions answered, as well as providing the team with general feedback in relation to the proposal. These meetings included representatives from TransGrid and URS. There were approximately 20 attendees at Mingoola; 150 at Tenterfield; 10 at Drake and 10 at Casino.

Public information sessions held between 4 and 6 August 2009 and included the team attending three sessions located in Tenterfield. These were half day sessions where the public could again attend to have any concerns and queries answered or provide general feedback in relation to the proposal. These meetings included representatives from TransGrid and URS. There were approximately 10 attendees on the 4 August, 15 on the 5 August and 10 on the 6 August.

Valuable information was collected at these information sessions with the team ensuring that comments were collected by filling out a feedback form for each person with specific questions or issues. The information collected is presented in **Section 3**.

Public Exhibition of Study Area

Following the identification of the Study Area, preliminary environmental studies, aerial surveys and feedback from the community, two additional areas were identified for consideration and were announced in July 2009. The expanded Study Area was placed on public exhibition for four weeks during the period 27th July to 28th August 2009. The purpose of the exhibition was to invite community members to review and provide comment on the Study Area as part of the on-going consultation process.

During this period, public information sessions were held as well as the provision of unmanned fixed displays in the five Councils. The sections above '**Fixed Display Sites**' and '**Public Information Sessions**' provide details on the activities undertaken. As discussed above, the TransGrid website is also provided as a medium for the community to gain additional information on the Project and study area.

Project Site Office

A Project Site Office located at 371 Rouse St, Tenterfield was opened in late 2009. The office is open from 8.00am to 4.00pm, Monday – Friday. Members of the public can drop into the office to view project information and put questions to the Project Team.

2.3 Feedback Tools

2.3.1 1800 contact number

A 1800 number was set up to allow people to register their interest and contact the project team. This number was included in the letters to lot holders, project update newsletters, feedback forms and was advertised in local newspapers. The recordings were checked regularly (morning, midday and evening) and calls were responded to within 24 hours.

All of the calls to the 1800 number were logged and disseminated to the project team. As of the 19th October 2010 there have been 214 calls logged via the 1800 number. The feedback received from these calls was collated in a database. A summary of issues raised as part of this process is presented in **Section 3**.

2.3.2 Feedback Form

Feedback forms were prepared to allow the community to readily provide the team with their comments and issues of concern. These forms were made available at both the fixed display sites and the public information sessions and were also sent out on request to members of the community that rang the 1800 number. The forms included a reply paid address where people could send their responses. To date there have been 53 feedback forms submitted. A summary of issues raised as part of this process is presented in **Section 3** and an example of the feedback form is provided in **Appendix A - Consultation material**.

2 Stakeholder Consultation

2.3.3 Questionnaire and Focus Group Registration Form

Focus Group Registration Forms were prepared to allow the community to provide their interest in participating in a focus group meeting as well allowing the community to readily provide the team with their comments and issues of concern.

There were 28 focus group registration forms submitted. A number of these marked their interest in participating in a focus group. There were four focus groups held at three locations. TransGrid engaged TNS Global to undertake these sessions aimed in gaining specific data from the community in relation to TransGrid's decision making. The focus groups were held at:

- Drake Village Resource Centre (Group 1) (1 September 2009);
- Tenterfield Best Western Henry Parkes (Group 2 and 3) (2 September 2009); and
- Mole River Area (Group 4) (3 September 2009).

A summary of issues raised from the questionnaire is presented in **Section 3**.

2.3.4 Focus Groups

With regard to the placement of above ground powerlines there is a distinct preference that powerlines be situated so as to minimise impact upon land usage and residents within the area. The following summarises details of community attitudes, concerns and preferences towards powerline placement against key factors identified by TransGrid as being potential considerations or constraints of actual power line route determination.

Proximity to buildings

Community preference is that routing of powerlines be undertaken in such a way that any proximity to buildings, (especially residential buildings) is avoided as a matter of priority.

Property size

There was a distinct preference that powerlines be routed so as to run across larger properties as opposed to smaller landholdings. The reasons for this preference were two fold: First, it was felt that on larger landholdings routing could occur so that maximum distance to any residential structures situated upon such holdings was able to be achieved; second, it was felt that the overall impact of a power line upon a larger land holding would be less in relative terms due to a larger proportion of that land holding being unaffected. More specifically it was felt that on a larger property the overall impact on potential land usage of the property (and hence impact upon land value) would be contained to only one part of the property, as opposed to impacting upon the property in its entirety.

Visual impact

It was felt by community members that the location of powerlines should be undertaken in a way that minimised the visual intrusion that the presence of powerlines had upon the landscape.

2.3.5 Lot Holder Consultations

TransGrid has been meeting with land owners at their request since May 2009 in order to talk through the project and respond to questions raised. Approximately 30 one-on-one meetings were requested following the Project Announcement. Since that time TransGrid have continued to meet with lot

holders to discuss the position of the alignment and to answer questions and/or address concerns raised. TransGrid have also continually met with lot holders to discuss potential issues arising from surveyors and other consultants accessing their properties.

2.4 Consultation Activities: Government Agency Consultation

Meetings were held with each of the five local councils between 6 and 8 April 2009, except Richmond Valley Council as they were not available at that time and stated that they would make a submission if they had any issues of concern.

The meetings allowed the councils to be briefed on the project and for them to ask questions or raise issues that they request are addressed as part of the project and the associated EA.

A list of relevant State and Local government bodies was developed in consultation with TransGrid. Relevant agencies, including the Councils, were invited to attend a Planning Focus Meeting (PFM). The DoP issued the Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) and the planning focus meeting (PFM) invitation on 7 August 2009. The PFM was held at URS North Sydney on 24 August 2009.

Agencies attending the PFM comprised:

- Department of Planning;
- Industry and Investment NSW (via conference call);
- Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, Office of Water (via conference call);
- Land and Property Management Authority (via conference call); and
- Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (via conference call).

Director General Requirements (DGRs) for the project were received on 14 September 2009.

Inputs to the DGRs from various government agencies required follow up as part of the EA process. Advice and clarifications were sought from relevant Government departments as each of the technical studies progressed, as detailed below.

Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water

Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) was initially consulted on 9 September 2009 to obtain input into the Director General's Requirements (DGRs) for the Project. During this consultation they raised issues of Water Quality, Contaminated Land, Noise, Flora and Heritage. These issues were incorporated into the DGRs for the Project.

DECCW were also contacted during the initial stages in the preparation of the Indigenous and Historic Heritage Assessment. DECCW were also consulted during the preparation of the Flora and Fauna Environmental Assessment report regarding the development of a compensatory offset package to compensate for the unavoidable loss of biodiversity for the Project.

NSW Office of Water

The NSW Office of Water was initially consulted on 1 September 2009 to obtain input into the DGRs for the Project. During this consultation they raised issues of Riparian Management, Water Issues, Acid Sulphate Soils, Farm Dams, Flooding Issues, Groundwater and Surface Water. These issues were incorporated into the DGRs for the Project.

2 Stakeholder Consultation

Land and Property Management Authority

The Land and Property Management Authority was initially consulted on 4 September 2009 to obtain input into the DGRs for the Project. During this consultation they raised general additional requirements including the level of information which is required to be shown on the plans, descriptions of the staging of the development, details of any land acquisitions and consultation with Aboriginal Land Council and NSW Native Title Services Limited. While these issues were not directly incorporated into the DGRs for the Project, they have been indirectly incorporated and addressed in the EA.

NSW Industry & Investment

The NSW Industry & Investment Department was initially consulted on 8 September 2009 to obtain input into the DGRs for the Project. During this consultation they raised the following issues: Forestry, Fisheries, Agricultural, Weed and Pest management, Biosecurity and Emergency Impacts, Mineral Resources. These issues were incorporated into the DGRs for the Project.

NSW Health

NSW Health was consulted with in relation to the Project to obtain input into the DGRs. No response was received.

Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment management Authority

Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority (BRG-CMA) was consulted on 16 September to obtain information for the DGRs for the project. The issues raised by the BRG-CMA relate primarily to the inclusion of mitigation measures to minimise the impact of loss of vegetation and will as other rehabilitation management issues.

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPAC) were consulted with during the initial stages of the Project. The Project was referred to the SEWPAC and has been determined a 'controlled action' because it is likely to have a significant impact on threatened species and communities listed under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPBC Act) (section 18 & 18A). Supplementary DGRs were issued for the Project on 16 March 2010.

SEWPAC were also consulted during the preparation of the Flora and Fauna Environmental Assessment report regarding the development of a compensatory offset package to compensate for the unavoidable loss of biodiversity for the Project.

Further consultation was undertaken with DSEWPC (per comms) on 7 September 2010 in regards to the impact that the proposed access tracks would have on the existing referral under the EPBC Act. In response to these discussions, DSEWPC advised that no EPBC referral variation was required regardless of how much vegetation is to be cleared as the referral mentions that the EA will consider all integral elements required to develop, construct and maintain the transmission line.

NSW Rural Fire Service

The NSW Rural Fire Service was consulted in January 2010 during preparation of the Bushfire Assessment Report. Their comments were incorporated into the Bushfire Assessment Report for the Project.

Livestock, Health and Pest Authorities (Rural Lands Protection Board).

The Livestock, Health and Pest Authorities (Rural Lands Protection Board) were consulted via email on 18 November 2010. At the time of lodgement, no response was received.

Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC)

The ARTC has been consulted regarding the impact that the Project may have on their property (the North Coast Railway), due to the nature and the proximity of works to the ARTC line. The Department of Planning may consult with the ARTC during the exhibition of the EA and TransGrid will continue to consult with the ARTC regarding the impact of the Project on the North Coast Railway.

NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA)

The NSW RTA were consulted with in relation to the Project, The NSW RTA advised that they did not require input into the DGRs for the Project. Where the proposed power line crosses a state road (such as the New England or Bruxner Highways), under Section 138 of the NSW Roads Act 1993, the proposed works would require formal approval from the RTA and the appropriate Council.

2.5 Consultation Activities: Stakeholder Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with Aboriginal stakeholders for the Project according to the *Guidelines for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Community Consultation* (DECCW 2005) as detailed in the Heritage Report prepared for the Project. As a result of the notification phase, 11 Aboriginal groups and two individuals (total 13) were identified consulted and given an introduction to the Project. Following the initial consultation, letters describing the methods to be employed for the archaeological assessment and asking for any Project specific cultural information were also issued to all Registered Stakeholders. The only responses to these letters have revolved around service provision for the archaeological assessment (issues to do with insurance, being fit for work and daily rates). Additional consultation was undertaken, following Project changes which were made to incorporate the proposed access tracks into the Project. On Thursday 7 October 2009, letters were despatched to the registered stakeholders advising of the upcoming fieldwork and inviting one representative from each of the groups. Follow up phone calls were also made.

2.6 Consultation Database

2.6.1 Contact and Issues Database

A database was set up to manage contacts made which included contact details, issues of concern raised during consultation and responses provided. The database has been used to track enquiries and submissions received.

2 Stakeholder Consultation

2.6.2 Summary of Stakeholder Contacts

A summary of responses from stakeholder contacts up until 19 October 2010 is presented in **Table 2-1**. The issues raised from these responses are presented in **Section 3**.

Table 2-1 Summary of Stakeholder Contacts

Method of Contact	Number of Contacts
Calls to 1800 Number	214
Visitors to Information Sessions	Approximately 375 - 425
Feedback Forms Submitted	53
Focus Group and Registration Forms	28
Letters Received	100

Key Issues Identified

3.1 Introduction

New transmission lines can be the cause of concern within communities even if they recognise the benefits of such projects. As a result of the consultation carried out, issues of interest and concern to stakeholders were identified. Four forms of data collection were utilised: a 1800 number, feedback forms, questionnaire and focus group registration forms and qualitative research through structured focus group discussions. The results of these forms of data collection are outlined below.

3.2 Issues Identified

In general terms, stakeholders were concerned with the proximity of the transmission line to residences, particularly in cases where their property was either within or in close proximity to the Study Area. The visibility of the infrastructure and the potential environmental impact the line would have in the area were two other commonly voiced concerns.

A high proportion of stakeholders contacted the 1800 number to confirm the location of their property in relation to the Study Area. Many whose property did not fall within the Study Area, but their neighbours did, also sought information regarding the development, and requested to be kept up-to-date with project development.

The location of the Study Area in proximity to locations where there is a relatively high density of dwellings was one of the key issues. In particular, the proximity of the Study Area to the town of Tenterfield was a key issue identified through all four feedback tools. Feedback obtained in particular via the 1800 number and during the course of the information sessions identified a number of individuals who either had an approval for proposed development activities, or had plans to submit an application for development or subdivision at some point in the future. The location of submitted and approved development applications was confirmed with Council and mapped as part of the constraints identification project stage (refer to ***Constraints Identification and Preferred Corridor Report***).

A number of individuals had views on the location of the Study Area and provided comment in regard to alternative locations. Perceived health effects of the transmission line on both humans and stock were raised in all four forms of feedback. Community members with young children and grandchildren were most concerned. Some individuals felt that not enough information was provided on the Project, and that it was a deliberate act to keep the community uninformed. **Table 3-1** below details the number of key issues raised by individuals via the 1800 number, feedback forms and questionnaire forms.

3 Key Issues Identified

Table 3-1 Key Issues Identified Via 1800 Number, Feedback Forms and Questionnaire Forms

Key Issue Identified	Number
Proximity of Transmission Line to Residences	68
Other Data Request (e.g. dates of information sessions)	67
Location of Property in Relation to the Study Area	62
Request Project Information	60
Visibility of Infrastructure	55
Environmental Issues (incl. heritage, biodiversity)	53
Compensation and Easement Acquisition	61
Land Use Impacts (inc. Traffic and Access)	50
Impact on Property Value and Property Damage	38
Use of Publicly Owned Land Where Possible	31
Safety During Operation and / or Construction	31
Request One on One Meeting	30
Fire Management	29
Security of Electricity Supply	28
Health (incl. EMF)	22

A number of individuals did not have a problem with having the transmission line through their property, but only in certain locations. Their responses typically focussed on requesting information regarding the Project and formally requesting the opportunity to meet with TransGrid so that property issues could be discussed and managed.

The remainder of this section of the Report provides further detail on the issues raised by each of the feedback methods.

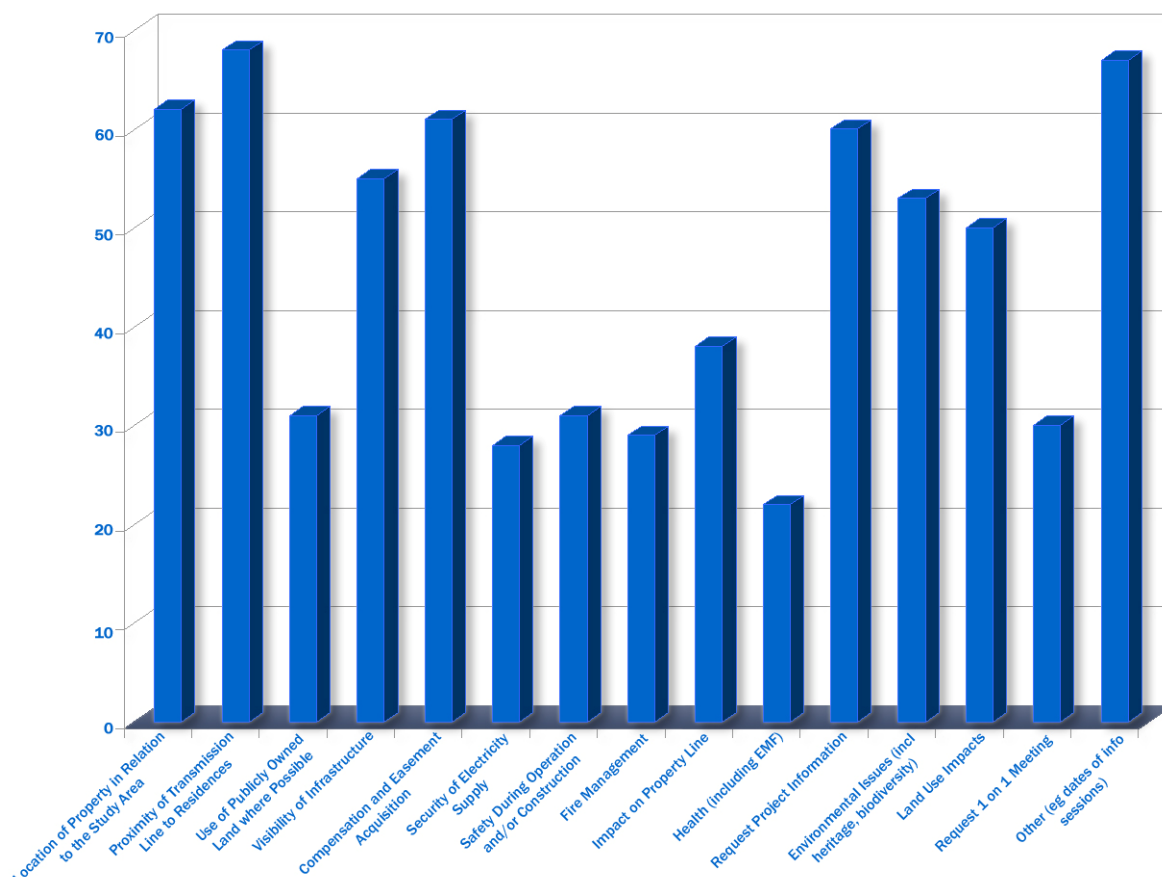
1800 Number

As at 19 October 2010, a total of 214 calls had been received on the 1800 number. The number was established in February 2009. The most common issues raised via the 1800 number were requests for further project information, confirmation of the location of the Study Area, and requests for associated information such as the location of the Information Sessions (**Chart 3-1**). The location of the Study Area, preferred corridor and proposed alignment in relation to callers' property was the most common enquiry, along with general questions regarding the route of the transmission line and associated issues including project schedule, the compensation and easement acquisition process, and restrictions on activities within the easement.

A number of issues were raised regarding subdivision. Property owners who have either already subdivided, or were planning to subdivide, were concerned with the effect the transmission line would have on both the value of each subdivision and the ability to subdivide in the future.

3 Key Issues Identified

Chart 3-1 Consultation Issues Raised: 1800 Number (as of 19 October 2010)



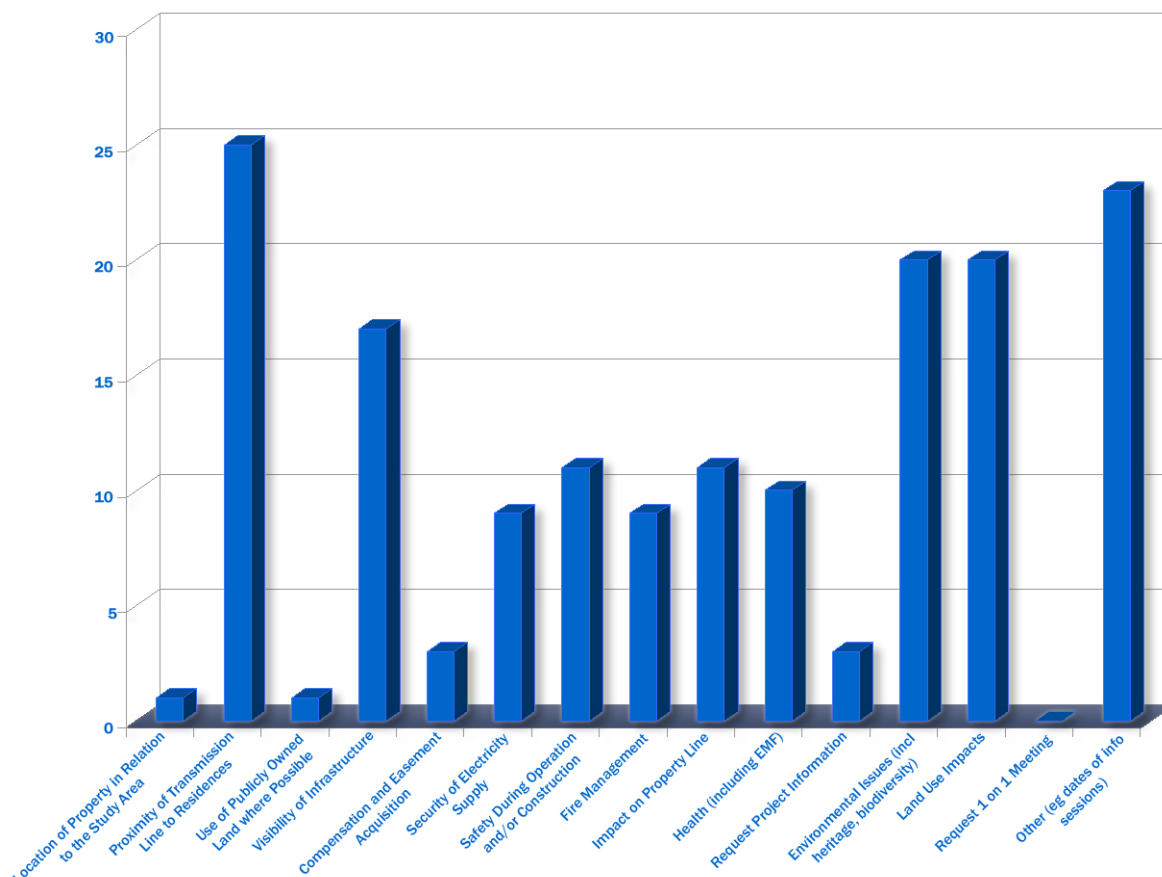
Feedback Forms

A total of 53 feedback forms were received. These were predominantly completed either during or soon after the public information sessions. The feedback forms provided a more detailed insight into social and environmental issues of concern. The proximity of the proposed transmission line to residences was the most commonly expressed issue (**Chart 3-2**). Environmental and land use impacts, as well as the visibility of the infrastructure were also strongly expressed.

The proximity of the transmission line to the Sunnyside Airfield and to personal air strips was an issue. Farmers who utilise light aircraft expressed concern that the transmission line would inhibit their agricultural practices.

3 Key Issues Identified

Chart 3-2 Consultation Issues Raised: Feedback Forms

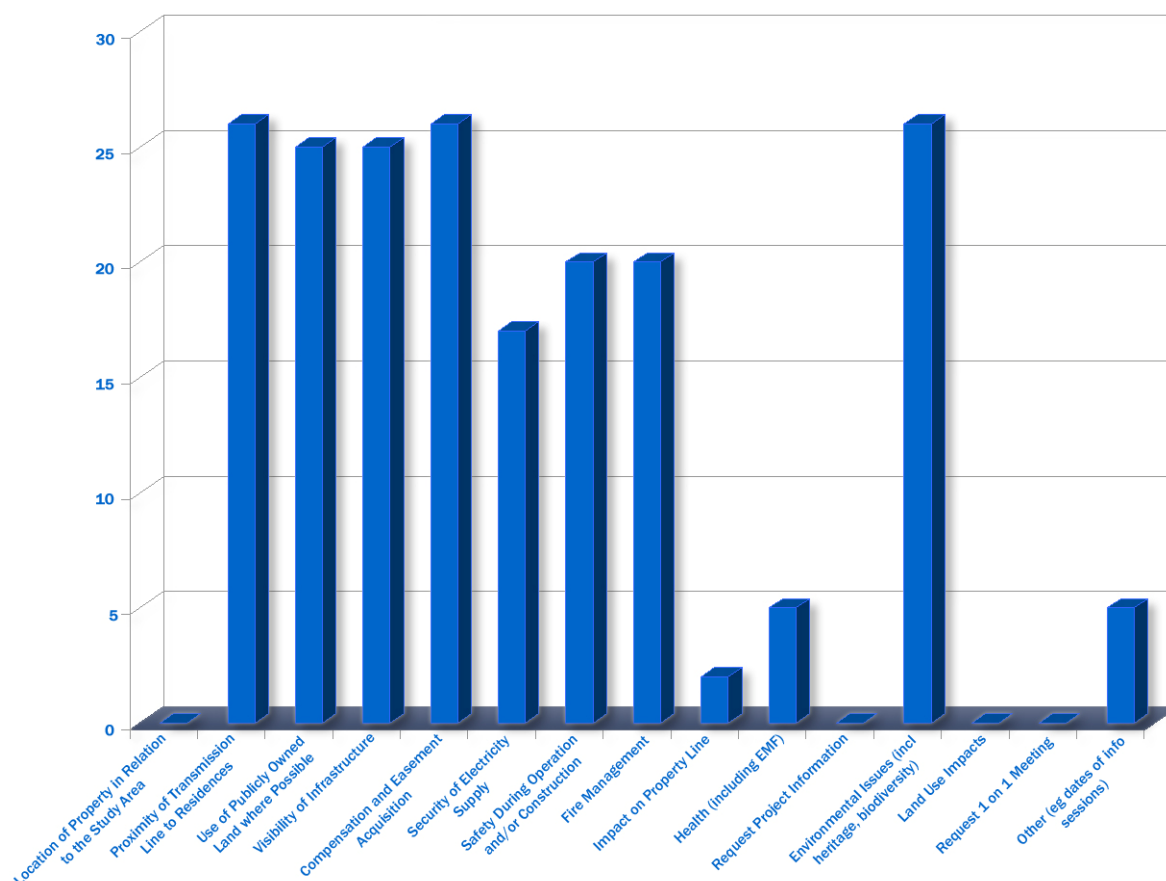


Questionnaire and Focus Group Registration Forms

A total of 28 questionnaire forms were received. Concerns identified included the proximity of the transmission line to residences, environmental issues associated with the Project, and adequate compensation for easement acquisition/use of existing easement (**Chart 3-3**). The use of publicly owned land was cited as an issue respondents requested TransGrid examine. Visibility of the infrastructure was also a key issue.

3 Key Issues Identified

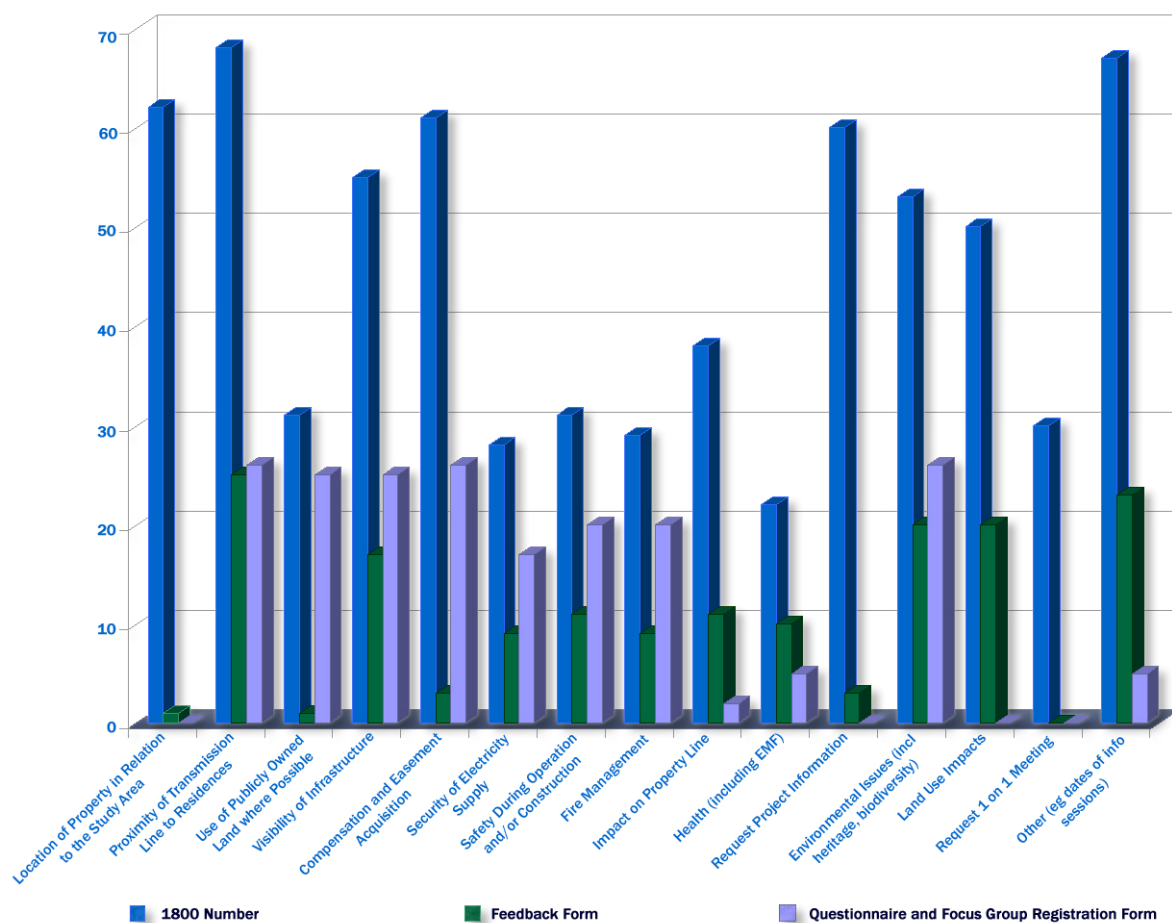
Chart 3-3 Consultation Issues Raised: Questionnaire and Focus Group Registration Forms



A summary of the consultation issues raised via each of the feedback methods to date is presented in **Chart 3-4**.

3 Key Issues Identified

Chart 3-4 Consultation Issues Raised: 1800 Number (as of 19 October 2010), Feedback, Questionnaire and Focus Group Registration Forms



Conclusion

Consultation undertaken during the development of the Constraints Identification and Preferred Corridor Selection Report (between February and September 2009) identified a number of issues raised by stakeholders in relation to the proposed transmission line. Proximity of the proposed transmission line to residences and traversing of small lots particularly near Tenterfield, were raised as key issues for consideration as the design stage of the Project progressed. These issues fed into the identification of the preferred corridor and the development of the alignment and the associated easement.

In identifying a corridor for the proposed line, TransGrid faced the challenge of balancing the different needs and expectations of many stakeholders. For this reason, comments from the community and from government stakeholders have assisted TransGrid and the Project Team in identifying a preferred corridor.

The local community that provided feedback is predominantly a rural community involved in agricultural and associated land-based enterprises. A number of respondents expressed concern over the proximity of the transmission line to residences and the associated visual impacts. Another issue of concern was the land use impacts, including the effect on the potential for future subdivision, development and also impact on the Sunnyside airstrip and smaller, private airstrips.

Other issues raised included flora and fauna protection, soil erosion control, dust and noise management and access issues.

In conclusion, the consultation undertaken has identified key issues of concern to the stakeholders associated with the proposed transmission line. The majority of the community raised issues primarily in relation to impact on property, proximity to residences and visibility of infrastructure. Questions were raised in relation to these key issues along with clarifications regarding project detail including project schedule, the easement acquisition and compensation process the approvals process. These issues were considered during selection of the preferred Project route, and ongoing consultation with lot holders has been undertaken to manage the process. The majority of potentially affected landholders expressed a desire to be informed as soon as possible once any new project-related decisions were made, this has been done through the various mechanisms discussed above.

Appendix A Consultation Material

Appendix A

Advertisements

TransGrid's Far North NSW Project Additional Study Areas Public Information Sessions

TransGrid is proposing to construct a new transmission line between the existing substations at Dumaresq (near Bonshaw) and Lismore to meet increasing electricity demand in Far North NSW.

After the identification of a 1-2km study area, preliminary environmental studies, aerial surveys and feedback from the community, TransGrid has identified two additional study areas for consideration.

TransGrid is inviting community members to review and provide comment on these additional areas as part of the ongoing consultation process, to help establish a preferred route for the transmission line.

TransGrid representatives will be available at the following public information sessions, to answer questions and to provide further information.

Information Sessions

Place: Mingoola Hall
'Walleroo', Tenterfield
Date: Tuesday 28th July 2009
Time: 3:00 - 7:00 pm

Place: Tenterfield RSL Pavillion
Molesworth St, Tenterfield
Date: Wednesday 29th July 2009
Time: 3:00 - 7:00 pm

Place: Drake Progress Association/
Community Hall
Alison St, Drake
Date: Thursday 30th July 2009
Time: 3:00 - 7:00 pm

Place: Casino Civic Hall
161 Canterbury St, Casino
Date: Thursday 30th July 2009
Time: 3:00 - 7:00 pm

Fixed Displays (Unmanned)

Place: Tenterfield Shire Council
Inverell Shire Council
Kyogle Council
Richmond Valley Council

For further enquiries, please phone the project hotline: 1800 857 300

Maps of the study areas and further information is available from TransGrid's Far North NSW Project page at:
http://www.transgrid.com.au/Current_Projects.htm

Written submissions regarding the proposed transmission line are invited until 28th August 2009 and can be mailed to:

c/o Rachel O'Hara
Reply Paid 75999
URS, Level 3,
116 Miller Street,
North Sydney, NSW 2090.



Project Update Newsletters

TransGrid's Far North NSW Project Update

May 2009

For Your Information

This project update provides the community with further information on the current stage of TransGrid's Far North NSW project.

Should you require any information in addition to this update, we encourage members of the community to contact TransGrid using the details provided.

Who is TransGrid?

TransGrid is the owner, operator and manager of the largest high voltage transmission network in Australia, connecting generators, distributors and major end users in New South Wales.

The transmission network is connected to Queensland and Victoria providing a robust electricity system that enables interstate energy trading.

Electricity is transported by TransGrid across the state via 12,500 kilometres of high voltage transmission lines. These power lines are supported by around 36,000 structures.

TransGrid is committed to providing a safe, reliable, efficient and environmentally responsible high voltage electricity service to our customers and the community.

Background to the Project

TransGrid constantly monitors the demand for electricity in NSW and has some of the nation's best planners who constantly forecast future electricity demand.

The population of Far North NSW is expected to grow by at least 23 per cent, or around 60,000 people by 2031. Consequently, peak demand for electricity in the region is expected to grow by more than 40 per cent over the next 10 years, which is significantly higher than the NSW average.

TransGrid's high voltage electricity transmission network is capable of supplying Far North NSW, however progressive increases in consumer demand has meant that upgrades and additions to the existing electricity transmission network are necessary to maintain system reliability for consumers.

TransGrid has undertaken a detailed assessment of the options available to meet the region's electricity reliability needs. This analysis considered both network (transmission line) solutions and non network alternatives (such as demand management).

The Final Report on this assessment is available on TransGrid's website: <http://www.transgrid.com.au>.

The Far North NSW Project

To meet increasing demand, TransGrid has announced plans to invest \$227 million into the electricity network in Far North NSW.

TransGrid is proposing to construct a 215km 330kV electrical link between TransGrid's existing substations near Bonshaw and Lismore.

TransGrid's plans include:

- the upgrade and replacement of the existing transmission line between Tenterfield and Lismore
- a new transmission line between our substation near Bonshaw and Tenterfield

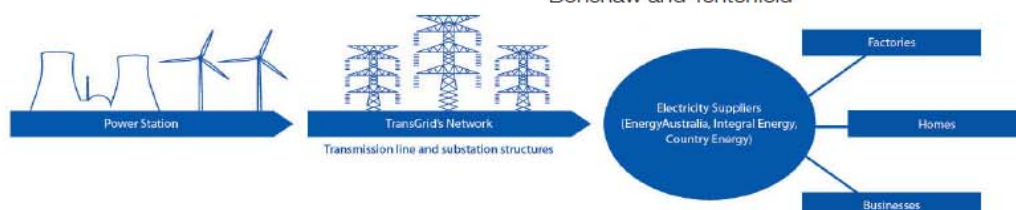


Diagram: Where TransGrid fits in the electricity delivery process



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TransGrid's Far North NSW Project Update

What's the Current Status of the Project?

TransGrid has commenced preliminary work on detailed field and environmental studies within a 1-2km wide study area between Bonshaw and Tenterfield.

These studies will assist in determining the location of a 60m wide easement necessary for the transmission line.

At the conclusion of the preliminary environmental studies, TransGrid will be in a better position to provide more detailed information about the proposed project.

Bonshaw-Tenterfield Study Area

The current study area between Bonshaw and Tenterfield was selected based on detailed feasibility studies, which considered factors such as:

- national parks
- state forests
- aboriginal and non-aboriginal heritage sites
- steep slopes and drainage lines
- the location of airstrips
- threatened and endangered ecological communities

Various maps of the selected study area and factors considered so far can now be obtained from your local council chambers or downloaded from TransGrid's website.

Preferred Transmission Line Route

A preferred location for the 60m wide easement for the new transmission line between Bonshaw and Tenterfield has not been established.

The final results of the environmental studies currently taking place will assist us in determining a preferred route for the transmission line.

TransGrid would like to reassure the community that when planning a preferred route for the proposed transmission line, the proximity of any residential dwellings is taken into account and we place a high priority on maintaining appropriate buffer zones and clearances.

TransGrid would also like to clarify that when easements are established, houses, buildings and other substantial structures are located **outside** the easement area.

Once concluded, the preferred route of the transmission line will take into account both environmental and social considerations, as well as the cost of infrastructure.

The preferred route will be the route that establishes the best balance between these factors.

Landholder Notification

TransGrid has contacted landholders directly that are located within the current study area of the transmission line project.

Should you wish to clarify whether or not you reside in the study area, please contact TransGrid using the project hotline 1800 857 300.

Community Information

TransGrid values the feedback from the community regarding the proposed project.

TransGrid would like to reiterate that we are in the very early stages of an important project for the region and understands the community's need for up-to-date and factual information.

TransGrid is more than happy to arrange one-on-one meetings once the preliminary environmental studies have taken place in the coming weeks, when we will be in a better position to provide more detailed information to the public.

Project Timetable

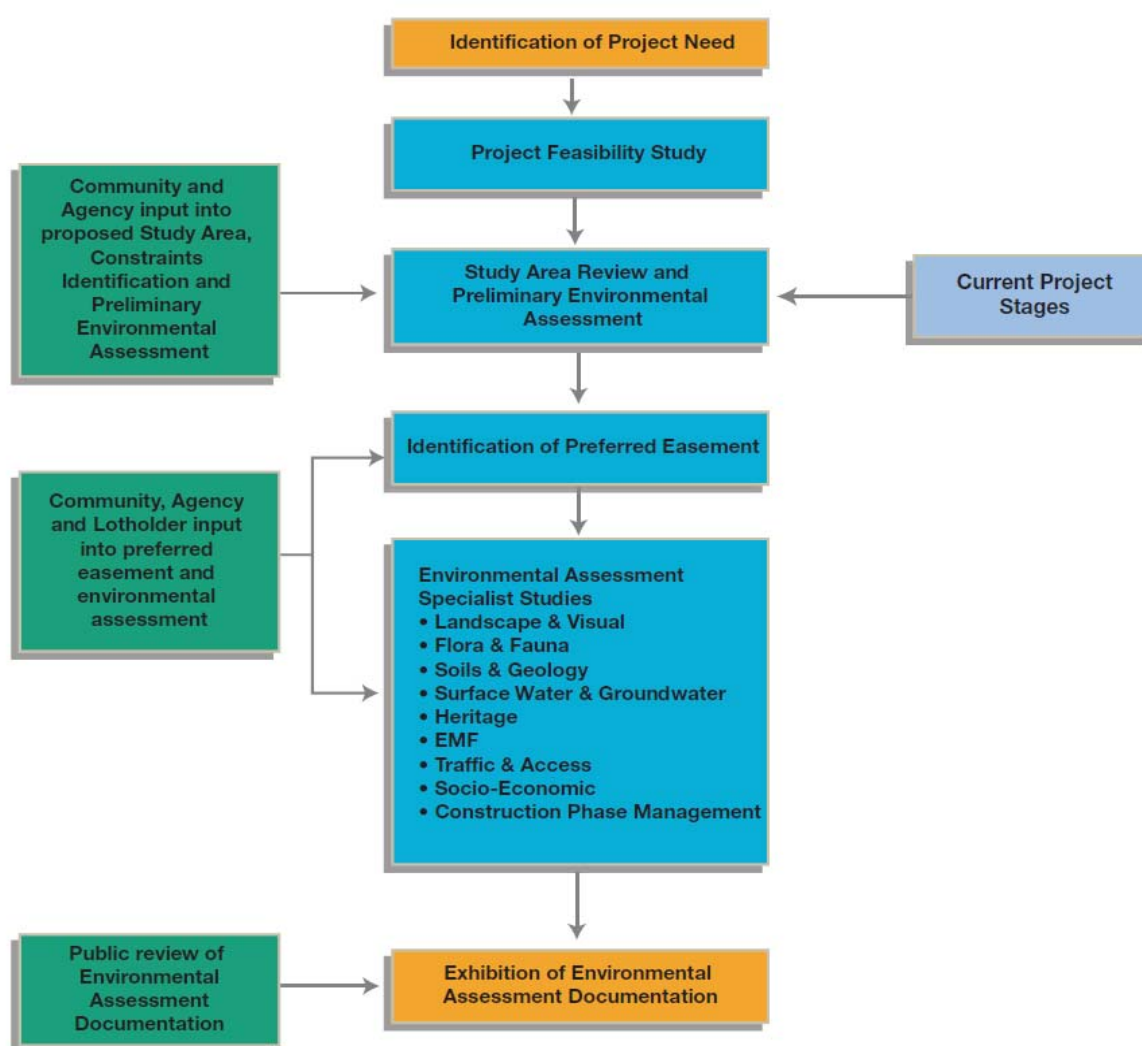
The detailed Environmental Impact Statement is scheduled to be publicly exhibited in October 2009. Construction is expected to commence in August 2010.



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TransGrid's Far North NSW Project Update

Environmental Assessment and Consultation Process



TransGrid's Far North NSW Project Update

For Further Information

To obtain further information on the project TransGrid encourages you to visit the recently updated Far North NSW Project page at:

http://www.transgrid.com.au/Current_Projects.htm

Alternatively, you can visit your local council chambers where detailed maps and feedback forms are currently provided.

Contact Us

For specific project questions, to register your interest or make a personal appointment, please use TransGrid's toll-free project number:

1800 857 300

Or send written enquiries or feedback to:

**Reply Paid 75999
NORTH SYDNEY
NSW 2060**



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TransGrid's Far North NSW Project

COMMUNITY UPDATE



Dear Resident,

Welcome to the latest community update for TransGrid's Far North NSW Project.

Thank you to all community members and local residents who shared with us their ideas about the project in 2009.

Hearing your feedback firsthand has been extremely valuable. The input provided has informed TransGrid's decision for the preferred transmission line corridor.

We are now finalising the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Far North NSW Project, with the aim to have it ready for public exhibition in the new year.

TransGrid will be providing the community with additional opportunities to have their say about the project during the EA's exhibition period. We welcome your ongoing input into the project, and will advise of consultation details in early 2010.

Please read on for more information on the current status of TransGrid's Far North NSW Project.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in the project and we look forward to working closely with you in the new year.

Yours sincerely,

The Project Team

Did you know?

- TransGrid's upgrade works will provide the base infrastructure required to attract renewable energy investments to the region
- The upgrades will increase network efficiency, saving more than 33,000 tonnes of CO₂ each year – the equivalent to taking 7,400 cars off NSW roads every year
- Peak demand for electricity in the NSW Far North Coast is expected to grow by more than 40 per cent over the next 10 years – a rate of growth above the NSW average
- TransGrid's \$227 million investment will provide reliable infrastructure to meet the forecast demand, providing a secure electricity service for the Far North Coast
- TransGrid has opened a project site office at 371 Rouse St, Tenterfield. Office opening hours are 8.00am to 4.00pm, Tuesday – Thursday
- You can sign up to receive email alerts of updates to the project website at: www.transgrid.com.au/farnorthnsw

Appendix A

Public exhibition set for the new year

TransGrid is currently finalising the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed upgrade. This is the document made up of technical studies that will be submitted to the NSW Department of Planning for determination and will be publicly exhibited.

Following exhibition, the Minister for Planning will determine the project under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)*.

TransGrid is upgrading the existing transmission line between Tenterfield and Lismore, constructing a new substation at Tenterfield and connecting it through a new line to the Dumaresq Switching Station, near Bonshaw.

We anticipate the EA will be placed on public exhibition for comment in the first half of 2010.

During this time, TransGrid will consult with the community, with input feeding directly into the assessment process.

Tenterfield Site Office

TransGrid opened a project site office in Tenterfield during November. Michelle Wilson, our Project Support Officer, is on site three days per week.

Office Details:

Location: 371 Rouse St, Tenterfield.
Office hours: 8.00am to 4.00pm, Tuesday – Thursday

Christmas Closure:

The office will be closed from 24 December 2009 to 5 January 2010.

Infrastructure for renewable energy

TransGrid understands that communities across NSW will look increasingly to renewable energy for its future electricity supply.

This project will deliver a more reliable electricity network to the Far North Coast – which will encourage companies to invest in renewable technologies in the area.

Transmission infrastructure will be a key facilitator of the shift to lower emissions and renewable electricity.

TransGrid recently connected the largest wind farm built in NSW to its network, located in Bungendore.

It is likely that in the future, more large scale wind farms will be located in areas remote from major population and demand centres. A reliable transmission network provides an efficient platform for renewable energy transport.

By investing in the infrastructure required for renewable energy, TransGrid is investing in a cleaner, greener NSW.

Community comments on the upgrade

TransGrid appreciates the feedback gained during the consultation process in 2009. Input was provided at public information sessions, individual meetings, focus groups, feedback forms and questionnaires.

Your feedback has been central to shaping TransGrid's project, especially regarding the selection of a preferred transmission line corridor.

Some of the things we considered in selecting a preferred corridor, based on your feedback, included:

- Avoiding endangered ecological communities, threatened species and habitats
- Reducing the number of affected properties by avoiding densely built-up areas
- Minimising visual impacts for surrounding residents
- Ensuring access from existing roads is maintained

TransGrid has listened to the important matters the community has raised. We have incorporated your feedback into our project decision-making.

And we will continue to do so.

There will be more opportunities to have your say during the EA exhibition process. We will continue to keep you updated on opportunities for consultation in the new year.

Contact us

For specific project questions, to register your interest or make a personal appointment, please call TransGrid's toll-free project number: **1800 857 300**

Or send written enquiries or feedback to:

Reply Paid 75999
NORTH SYDNEY
NSW 2060

Christmas Closure

TransGrid's regional and Sydney offices will be closed from 12pm on 24 December 2009 to 4 January 2010. The Tenterfield Site Office will be closed from 24 December 2009 to 5 January 2009

Contact us

Reply Paid 75999
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060

Phone 1800 857 300
Email dumaresq.lismore@transgrid.com.au
Web www.transgrid.com.au/farnorthnsw



December 2009

Appendix A

Feedback Forms

TransGrid's Far North NSW Project Update

May 2009

Have your say: Your comments on the proposed transmission line study area (see overleaf) are appreciated and we invite you to complete this feedback form and return it by 30/06/09 to:

REPLY PAID 75999
North Sydney NSW 2060

Details (optional):

Name:

Telephone:

Postal Address:

Mobile:

Email:

If you would like to receive information concerning the project, please indicate how:

☐ email

☐ post

☐ other

1. Are you aware of any constraints that the project team should consider when determining the preferred easement, such as the issues listed below or any other issues?

Please tick the areas of most interest or concern to you in relation to the choice of the preferred easement

SOCIO ECONOMIC ISSUES

- ☐ Land use impacts
- ☐ Fire management
- ☐ Power for growth
- ☐ Security of supply
- ☐ Safety during construction
- ☐ Safety during operation
- ☐ Proximity to villages
- ☐ Proximity to residences
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- ☐ Flora/fauna protection
- ☐ Soil erosion control
- ☐ Water quality
- ☐ Dust management
- ☐ Noise and vibration
- ☐ Weed management
- ☐ Visual amenity
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

If there is insufficient room on this form, you are welcome to make a separate submission. Should you wish to register your interest or speak with a member of the project team, please call the toll-free project number 1800 857 300.



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URS

2. Have you any other comments or suggestions about the proposed transmission line study area?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

43177662/01/01

Appendix A

Example Letters to Lot Holders



TransGrid

ABN 19 622 755 774

70-72 Commonwealth Street
Surry Hills New South Wales 2010
PO Box A1000 Sydney South
New South Wales 1235 Australia
Facsimile (02) 8204 6370
Telephone (02) 8204 6300
Web <http://www.transgrid.com.au>
DX1122 Sydney

14 April 2009

To the Lot Holder

RE: Far North NSW Transmission Line Upgrade

TransGrid has identified the need to upgrade the power supply in Far North NSW and is proposing to construct an electrical link between the existing electricity switching station near Bonshaw and its Lismore Substation. The purpose of this project is to ensure the community in both the Far North NSW region and other parts of the state continue to enjoy a reliable electricity supply.

Forecasts have revealed that Far North NSW's peak electricity demand will increase by more than 40% over the next 10 years. On average, the region's demand is expected to grow at 4.6% per annum, which is more than double the NSW average of 2.2%. This increase is largely being driven by population growth in the area.

TransGrid has undertaken technical assessments of the options available to meet the needs of the Far North NSW population. These assessments included an analysis of non-transmission network alternatives, as well as detailed desktop and preliminary field studies of an area of just under 7000km² to identify constraints such as threatened ecological communities and heritage sites.

Part of TransGrid's plans to ensure the security of power in the region includes the construction of a new 330,000 Volt transmission line between Bonshaw and Tenterfield. Over the coming weeks, TransGrid will begin detailed field and environmental studies within a 1-2 km wide study area, which includes your property, to help determine the positioning of an easement necessary for the proposed transmission line.

These studies will form part of a detailed Environmental Impact Statement scheduled to be publicly exhibited in October 2009, which will influence the preferred route of the transmission line.

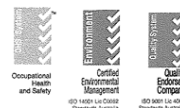
Should the preferred route be located within your property, TransGrid will contact you directly to discuss this proposal and seek your input on this important power upgrade for Far North NSW.

If you wish to speak with the team sooner, please call our toll free number 1800 857 300.

Yours sincerely,

Denis Novakovic
Project Manager

TransGrid is a NSW statutory State-owned corporation
100% Recycled Paper



URS

Appendix A

Media Releases

MEDIA RELEASE



ABN 19 622 755 774

201 Elizabeth Street (cnr Park St)
PO Box A1000 Sydney South
New South Wales 1235 Australia
Facsimile (02) 9284 3456
Telephone (02) 9284 3000
Web <http://www.transgrid.com.au>
DX1122 Sydney

21 July 2009

TransGrid asks community for input on two additional study areas

TransGrid will seek feedback from the community on two additional study areas to assist in selecting a preferred route for their proposed Far North NSW transmission line project.

The additional areas are north of Tenterfield. The first is located around the Mole River district and second extends further north of Tenterfield, towards the Tenterfield Creek Valley, before continuing east towards Black Swamp.

"Results from preliminary environmental studies and aerial surveys undertaken by TransGrid, as well as general feedback from the community consultation to date has been extremely useful to TransGrid staff in the ongoing route selection process," said Denis Novakovic, Project Manager at TransGrid.

"At the community meeting in early June, TransGrid made a commitment to the Tenterfield community to research any other feasible alternatives to the current study area, in which a preferred route could be located," said Mr Novakovic.

"We have been working hard since that meeting to deliver on our commitment, and a number of other options have been identified," he said.

"We also considered an option to the south of Tenterfield, which we consider not to be feasible."

"The options will be on display until the end of August and TransGrid will make a decision on a preferred route after it considers the additional community input it receives. The objective is to select a route for the transmission line which best balances the social, environmental and economic factors."

"We are looking forward to discussing the study areas with the Tenterfield community this next week as part of our ongoing consultation process."



TransGrid is a NSW statutory State-owned corporation



MEDIA RELEASE



ABN 19 622 755 774

201 Elizabeth Street (cnr Park St)
PO Box A1000 Sydney South
New South Wales 1235 Australia
Facsimile (02) 9284 3456
Telephone (02) 9284 3000
Web <http://www.transgrid.com.au>
DX1122 Sydney

TransGrid will be holding community consultation sessions over the coming fortnight (see below).

Community members who wish to discuss the project and/or are unable to attend the community information sessions are encouraged to contact the TransGrid's Project hotline on 1800 857 300.

Maps of the study areas and a study area analysis document are available on TransGrid's Far North NSW Project page at:
http://www.transgrid.com.au/Current_Projects.htm

Consultation Sessions

Mingoola

Place: Mingoola Hall
Walleroo, Tenterfield
Date: Tuesday 28 July, 2009
Time: 3.00 – 7.00pm

Tenterfield

Place: Tenterfield Memorial Hall
Date: Wednesday 29 July, 2009
Time: 3.00 – 7.00pm

Drake

Place: Drake Progress Association/
Community Hall
Date: Thursday 30 July, 2009
Time: 3.00 – 7.00pm

Casino

Place: Casino Civic Hall
Date: Thursday 30 July, 2009
Time: 3.00 – 7.00pm

Fixed Displays (Unmanned)

Place: Tenterfield Shire Council

Inverell Shire Council

Kyogle Shire Council

Richmond Valley Council

Lismore City Council



TransGrid is a NSW statutory State-owned corporation





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