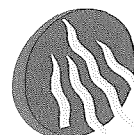




Hon Geoff Wilson MP

Member for Ferny Grove



**Queensland
Government**

Your Ref: Petitions
Our Ref: ME/08/4242, MC2869

Minister for Mines and Energy

13 FEB 2009

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition number 1169-08 tabled in Parliament on 26 November 2008, regarding the proposed Woolooga to Cooroy transmission line project.

Powerlink, in joint planning with ENERGEX, has identified the need to reinforce the bulk electricity supply network near Cooroy. This upgrade of the electricity supply network is necessary to meet the ongoing high growth in electricity demand in the Sunshine Coast, Gympie and surrounding areas. To meet demand, Powerlink needs to construct a new transmission line from its existing substation at Woolooga, approximately 14 kilometres north west of Gympie, to a proposed new substation at Eerwah Vale (named Cooroy South).

Powerlink has engaged independent environmental consultants, Parsons Brinckerhoff, to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed transmission line and to undertake consultation with landowners and stakeholders. No decision on the final alignment for the new line will be made until landowner and stakeholder consultation has been completed. This process includes members of the community being invited to make submissions to the EIS.

Apart from finalisation of the EIS, there are other processes to be completed before final determinations regarding this project are made. Powerlink has indicated that it intends to request Ministerial designation under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* ('the Act') of the corridor of land required for this project, as land for community infrastructure. In order to proceed with such a request, Powerlink will be required to formally advise landowners and other stakeholders of its intention and provide a further opportunity for landowners to make submissions regarding the project. This would occur after the final EIS is released.

Powerlink takes advice from recognised health authorities regarding electromagnetic fields (EMFs) issues.

In Australia, the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) is the Federal Government organisation charged with responsibility for EMFs.

Level 17
61 Mary Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 15216 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3225 1861
Facsimile +61 7 3225 1828
Email MinesandEnergy@ministerial.qld.gov.au
ABN 65 959 415 158

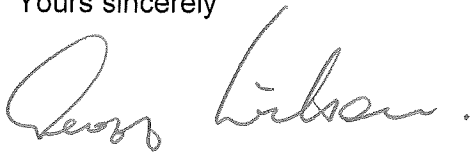
Powerlink has advised there have been many studies on the subject of EMFs and health; however the recognised health authorities have concluded there is no conclusive evidence of a causal association between EMF and cancer. The health authorities rely on the totality of a large number of studies and not on a single study.

In its 'Fact Sheet 8'. *Electromagnetic Fields and Possible Adverse Health Effects*, ARPANSA concludes: '*On balance, the scientific evidence does not indicate that exposure to 50Hz EMFs found around the home, the office or near powerlines, is a hazard to human health.*' The full text of this document, along with further information regarding EMFs can be obtained on the ARPANSA website www.arpansa.gov.au.

I am advised Powerlink follows the Electricity Networks Association (ENA) EMF policy, which includes practicing prudent avoidance, when designing new electricity infrastructure. This involves, where possible, locating electricity assets away from houses and increasing the height of the conductors above the ground. These strategies are based on the fact that the strengths of EMFs decrease rapidly with increasing distance from a powerline.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention and I trust this information is of assistance. Should you have any further enquiries, please contact Ms Linda Lloyd of the Department of Mines and Energy on telephone 3237 1501.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Geoff Wilson'.

GEOFF WILSON MP
Minister for Mines and Energy