

Consultation

On 28 October 2004 Transpower announced two possible route options for a proposed North Island 400 kV transmission line between Otahuhu and Whakamaru.

Between October 2004 and July 2005, Transpower consulted with landowners and occupiers along the possible routes, tangata whenua, local and regional councils, businesses, community groups and other interested parties.

So far, consultation feedback has helped Transpower decide on the final route for the proposed transmission line and has identified some ways to manage environmental effects.

Consultation feedback will help Transpower decide on the preferred route for the new transmission line.

WHY IS TRANSPOWER CONSULTING ABOUT THE PROPOSED 400 kV TRANSMISSION LINE?

Transpower is committed to developing and managing its assets in a way that has regard for the environment and the interests of communities. Transpower consults on a range of issues affecting the public and is committed to consulting in a meaningful way.

Whenever it undertakes consultation, Transpower's goals are to:

- **Inform** the public and affected parties through providing balanced and objective information to help people understand the issues, alternatives and solutions
- **Get public feedback** to help identify potential environmental effects and ways in which these can be remedied or mitigated
- **Consider feedback in finalising project proposals.**

HOW WILL CONSULTATION FEEDBACK AFFECT THE NEW TRANSMISSION LINE?

1. Before the final route was selected ... (October 2004 to June 2005)

Feedback and information gathered during this part of the consultation process has been an important consideration in selecting the final route for the proposed transmission line.

Between 28 October 2004 and May 2005 Transpower kept the public informed, provided opportunities for people to have their say, listened to and acknowledged comments, and provided feedback on how public input influenced the choice of the route for the proposed transmission line.

The consultation process has included information days, progress meetings, drop-in sessions, a dedicated website, a range of publications, a forum dedicated to EMF/health matters, written and oral submissions, personal and group meetings and responses to a wide range of questions. In some cases, Transpower's responses to issues raised by communities (such as undergrounding, HVDC and route options at Hunua) have involved substantial investigations.

Feedback from individuals and communities along the routes and from other stakeholders (which included some informal submissions) was used to help guide specialist studies including such matters as ecology, archaeology, air strips and aerial top dressing, and tourism. It was then used, along with the specialist studies, in the workshops that evaluated the two routes and recommended an interim preferred route. The 400-plus submissions on the interim route decision were reviewed prior to a further technical workshop. The review highlighted route sections where the interim decision was challenged allowing community concerns to be fully considered.

Consultation feedback has helped identify ways to manage effects of transmission line.

Feedback has also helped to identify specific 'area' issues and many individual property issues that we will discuss further with landowners and other interested parties.

You can find a summary of the feedback received to date (including submissions on the interim route decision) in a report available from www.gridupgrade.co.nz or by calling 0800 33 88 66.

There are still opportunities to have an input during the following stages:

1. Consultation from July 2005 onwards to determine the overhead line easement

Consultation with landowners within the final route, stakeholders, tangata whenua and other interested parties will also be important from July 2005. Together with the results of on-the-ground investigations, this consultation will help Transpower to confirm the centre-line for the transmission line (including tower locations) by late November 2005. It will also help us identify ways to manage the effects of the proposed transmission line.

An indicative centre-line has been identified as a starting point for discussions with landowners and for further environmental and engineering investigations. The indicative centre-line is based on the technical studies undertaken before July 2005 and, where possible, it has taken into account feedback relating to the position of the line in the submissions on the interim decision.

Following the announcement of the final route, Transpower will contact the owners and occupiers of properties within the route to arrange meetings. These meetings will allow Transpower to explain the principles behind the indicative centre-line and preliminary tower locations, listen to peoples' concerns and suggestions, and gather information about any factors that could affect the final alignment of the transmission line. This may result in changes to the position of the indicative centre-line, which could in turn affect adjoining properties within the route.

Transpower will also approach some landowners to secure Land Entry Agreements, which are needed to allow access to properties for environmental and engineering investigations.

We anticipate that people will choose to actively participate in these combined activities to help us achieve the best possible solution for those affected.

2. Consultation on the underground section from the Otahuhu substation to Ormiston Road

Transpower will start public consultation on the underground section (from the Otahuhu substation to the vicinity of Ormiston Road) by announcing a preferred underground cable route in late August 2005. Information on the preferred cable route and consultation opportunities will be distributed to affected and interested parties, and will be made available on the project website in late August.

3. Statutory Processes from April 2006

Transpower will lodge a Notice of Requirement to designate the land required for the proposed transmission line in 2006 (most likely April). The designation process will offer a number of opportunities for people to get involved, such as making a submission and speaking at a council hearing. For more information on the Notice of Requirement and the associated statutory processes, see the *Resource Management Act (RMA) processes* information sheet.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT ABOUT THE PROJECT?

Project information is available from information sheets (such as this) or fact sheets (on more technical issues). Copies of the information and fact sheets are available from the project website www.gridupgrade.co.nz or by calling 0800 33 88 66. We may need to call you back to discuss any issues you've raised in more detail, or to arrange a meeting.

Three project newsletters have also been sent out so far, and more are planned. If you're not on the project mailing list and would like to be, either call the freephone number or fill out the 'have your say' form on the website.