



**Hon Geoff Wilson MP**  
Member for Ferny Grove



**Queensland  
Government**

Your Ref: Petitions  
Our Ref: ME/08/4091, MC2774

**Minister for Mines and Energy**

12 FEB 2009

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

Dear Mr Laurie

I am in receipt of Petition number 1159-08 by the Queensland Legislative Assembly dated 13 November 2008. I have considered the Petition carefully and in accord with the requirement of Standing Orders of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, I am pleased to provide my response to the Petition.

Powerlink advises it is aware members of the Powerlink Action Group Eumundi (PAGE) have notified me of their intention to explore the development of a commercial localised generation or demand side management proposal. A request for relevant information from the Director-General of the Department of Mines and Energy (DME) was made by PAGE. Powerlink provided an Information Paper on 15 September 2008 and a Supplementary Paper on 26 September 2008 to DME and this information has been provided to PAGE by DME. The information contained in the papers included relevant demand forecasts, load profiles, and technical information.

Joint planning by Powerlink and ENERGEX has identified that the existing bulk supply to the large area comprising the Gympie region and the northern Sunshine Coast will reach capacity in 2014. Powerlink is legally obliged under the National Electricity Rules, the *Electricity Act 1994* and its transmission authority to upgrade its network so it can reliably meet the peak demand on the hot and humid summer days, even with the most critical network element out of service.

It should be noted that the key electricity measure is summer peak demand, rather than daily consumption. The proposed new transmission line can meet the forecast summer peak demand for at least 40 years from 2014, which is the normal planning horizon for this type of infrastructure. The technical information contained in the Information Paper provided to PAGE identified the size of the generation and demand side management required at various stages over 40 years.

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In regards to the second issue raised in the petition, I would note that the Queensland Government is actively supporting a comprehensive and coordinated response to climate change, and is committed to securing a sustainable energy future.

In June 2007, the Queensland Government released the *ClimateSmart 2050* strategy. *ClimateSmart 2050* is a \$414 million investment which establishes Queensland's long-term goals and provides a platform for the Queensland Government, the community and industry to move into a low-carbon future.

*ClimateSmart 2050* outlines a diverse range of short, medium and long-term actions that the Government is committed to delivering to move Queensland to a low emissions economy. This pathway towards cleaner energy includes gas and low emissions technology such as clean coal and renewables.

The Queensland Government has invested \$50 million over five years in the Queensland Renewable Energy Fund. This fund was launched on 18 February 2008 and provides grants and loans for projects that are beyond proof of concept and will contribute actual power generation into the Queensland grid.

To further encourage the geothermal industry, the Queensland Government has committed \$15 million over five years to the Queensland Geothermal Centre of Excellence, in collaboration with the University of Queensland, which will have a research and development focus on energy derived from subterranean 'hot rocks'.

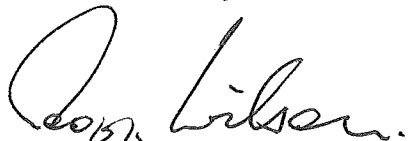
On 14 May 2008, the *Clean Energy Act 2008* was passed, giving legislative effect to the Queensland Government's Feed-In Tariff. The Solar Bonus Scheme pays customers 44 cents per kilowatt hour for surplus energy generated from photovoltaic solar systems.

These are some of the initiatives the Blich Government has announced to support the development of technology that will lead to reduced upfront costs and widespread deployment of solar and other renewable energy sources.

The Queensland Government is also encouraging individual Queenslanders to save energy and reduce their household emissions through its EnergyWise program. The suite of EnergyWise initiatives assists households identify energy wastage such as standby power and provides information and practical activities for households to learn how to conserve more energy through using energy efficient appliances.

The public can be assured that no decision will be made on the final alignment of the new powerline until all landowner and stakeholder consultation has been completed, and I would encourage all interested parties to participate in those processes.

Yours sincerely



**GEOFF WILSON MP**

**Minister for Mines and Energy**