



Electricity Undergrounding in NSW
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
PO Box Q290
QVB Post Office NSW 1230

11 April 2002

Dear Tribunal Members

In answering the question of whether the "impactor" (electricity user) pays or the "beneficiary" (ratepayer) pays for putting Sydney's electricity underground, in your Interim Report to the Minister for Energy you have advised the Minister the beneficiary (*ie* ratepayer) should pay.

Obviously the cost of undergrounding Sydney's cables should be shared between both the Impactor and the Beneficiary. Electricity consumers must bear *some* of the cost because the price of electricity is far too low considering its cost to the environment, not only the visual cost but the atmospheric pollution cost. Paying for some of the undergrounding in proportion to the rate of electricity use would help stop the profligate use of electricity. It might make people think of wearing clothing appropriate to the temperature (instead of turning on heaters or air conditioners) and it would encourage people to build or renovate their dwellings to take advantage of Sydney's excellent climate.

Your arguments about DNSP "property rights" may convince lawyers, but it does not cut ice with normal human beings. You may as well say that if electricity providers have been mucking up the environment in the past, they should be able to continue doing so. It may be legally neat, but it is *wrong* to decouple payment and responsibility and you all know it.

Regards

George Carrard