

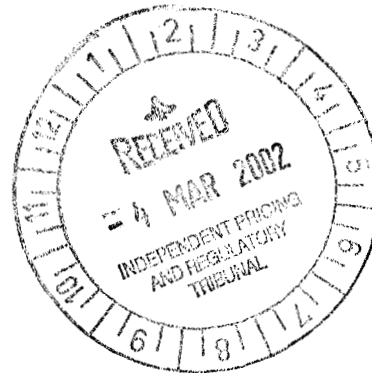


LOCAL GOVERNMENT and SHIRES ASSOCIATIONS of NSW

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Our Reference: R90/1025
Contact: Warren Taylor
1 March 2002

Mr Thomas G Parry
Chairman
Independent Pricing And Regulatory Tribunal
PO Box Q290
QVB POST OFFICE NSW 1230



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Dear Mr Parry

Undergrounding Electricity Cables in NSW

I refer to the Association's submission dated 8 February 2002 in support of undergrounding electricity cables in NSW.

Attached is a situation expressed by Ryde City Council, repeated by a number of other councils, that immediate short term uncertainties of the Government developing a policy on undergrounding electricity is causing concern about the possible impact this study could have on major public space upgrades currently about to commence. A key element of public space upgrades is the undergrounding of overhead cables, however, Councils are reluctant to outlay several million dollars on this work if it may otherwise be funded through alternate means in future years.

To overcome this dilemma, the Associations are seeking an indication from the State Government that if a Council did proceed with the undergrounding works as planned, it could be reimbursed for these costs if the Sydney wide project ultimately goes ahead.

Without such assurance, Councils are in a position where they may be forced to delay these significant and important public space upgrades pending a decision which could be several years away.

The Associations would appreciate these views being canvassed in your review.

Yours sincerely

Warren Taylor
Manager Advice and Development

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The Hon. Bob Carr **MP**
Premier
Minister for the Arts and
Minister for Citizenship
Level 40, Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

7 December 2001

Dear Premier

UNDERGROUNDING OF OVERHEAD CABLES

I am writing on behalf of Council in full support of your recent announcement to initiate a study into the undergrounding of overhead cables in Sydney.

As most of the streets in the Ryde City area contain overhead cables the undergrounding of these cables would significantly improve the visual quality of our **streets** enabling better planned street tree plantings and reducing the incidence of power outages during storms. Although the costs are substantial, the benefits will endure forever.

The issue of undergrounding cables is currently being considered by Council as part of major public space upgrades proposed for Eastwood and West Ryde Urban Villages. **The** indicative costs provided by Energy Australia for this work are substantial and may not be able to be funded for this reason. For example, it is expected that the cost for undergrounding cables in Victoria Road, West Ryde will be in excess of **\$1** million. As Victoria Road is a significant arterial road, however, the benefits of undergrounding will not only be evident to the local community but to millions of motorists each year.

As a consequence of your recent announcement, Council is now in a position where it may need to delay the commencement of these public space upgrades pending the outcome of the study. Conscious of the need to meet the expectations of the community, however, Council is keen to proceed with the undergrounding of cables, subject to you indicating that the monies outlaid could be recouped from any future proceeds allocated to the Ryde City area.

In making this request, Council is not seeking your guarantee that undergrounding of overhead cables will proceed, rather an indication that if it does proceed, Council could be reimbursed for costs of work it wishes to undertake in the interim period. Without this advice, Council **may** be forced to delay some very important upgrades in two major commercial centres.

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Ryde
City Council

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I trust you can appreciate Council's present situation and I await your favourable response. Please be assured, however, that Council fully supports your initiative and will await with interest the recommendations of your study.

Should you wish to obtain more information about the specific upgrades proposed for Eastwood and West Ryde, please do not hesitate to contact me on **9952-8052**.

Yours sincerely

Michael G McMahon
General Manager