

TasNetworks' Cost Pass Through Application – August–September 2024 Storm Event – Objection Submission

Attention: Arek Gulbenkoglul
General Manager,
Network Expenditure

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Dear General Manager- Arek Gulbenkoglul,

I strongly oppose TasNetworks' cynical and opportunistic attempt to slug electricity consumers with a \$4.6 million Bill under the guise of a cost pass through following the August–September 2024 storm event.

This disgraceful money grab, supported by the Australian Energy Regulator's (AER) demonstrably non-independent, incompetent, and compromised processes, is a direct violation of the National Electricity Objective and a slap in the face to every household and small business already crushed under the weight of skyrocketing energy prices.

It is absolutely clear that storms are foreseeable events in Tasmania.

They are not extraordinary, nor unpredictable.

They are part of our climate reality, and any competent network operator must build financial, operational, and material resilience into its planning and infrastructure management.

1. Does the August–September 2024 storm event meet the definition of a cost pass through event under clause 6.6.1(a1) of the NER and TasNetworks' current revenue determination?

It should not. The storm was severe, yes—but it was neither unprecedented nor unforeseeable.

Tasmania experiences significant weather events regularly.

Any network pretending to be shocked by such an occurrence is either grossly incompetent or deliberately mismanaging risk for the purpose of socialising private failures.

By accepting this application under the “natural disaster” clause, the AER would be willfully redefining known environmental risk as “exceptional” in order to green-light another cost shift from utility to customer.

That is unacceptable.

2. Is the increase in costs that TasNetworks has incurred as a result of the event material?

The \$9.41 million in claimed storm-response costs—of which \$4.6 million is being passed to consumers—is a direct result of TasNetworks' systemic underinvestment in durable, Australian-made, storm-hardened infrastructure.

If TasNetworks had prioritised robust, high-quality assets instead of fragile, short-lifespan RenewaBULL junk components pushed by federal ideology (not engineering logic), these costs would never have ballooned.

The “material” nature of this cost is a self-inflicted wound and consumers should not be the ones forced to bandage it.

3. Are the costs identified by TasNetworks incremental to costs already allowed for in its current revenue determination, and related solely to the occurrence of the pass through event?

TasNetworks has already been funded to maintain a resilient network.

If it failed to meet its obligations under its revenue determination, that is a performance failure, not an excuse for a revenue top-up.

The claim that these costs are “incremental” is suspect and unsubstantiated.

What isn't clear in the Application is how much of this is catch-up spending is due to historic neglect and misallocation of capital toward “net zero” pet projects rather than core reliability functions.

4. Are the decisions and actions TasNetworks has taken in relation to the event efficient?

Absolutely not. A three-week delay to restore power in some areas is evidence of gross inefficiency, not prudence.

Was TasNetworks relying on foreign-sourced, just-in-time replacement parts from CCP supply chains?

Was it understaffed because of cost-cutting?

Was equipment so cheap and underengineered that poles and wires failed where they shouldn't have?

This is the cost of deprioritising local, resilient, sovereign infrastructure in favour of unvetted, insecure and intermittent RenewaBULL technologies peddled by BLACKOUT BOWEN's policy clowns.

5. Are there any other factors the AER should take into account in making its determination?

Yes. The AER must consider:

•National Security Risks:

Dependence on CCP-manufactured infrastructure components & control directly undermines our energy sovereignty.

Read: Patricia Adams, “China's Energy Dream” (GWPF, 2021) – carbon policy is now a tool of strategic sabotage.

•Consumer Protection Failures:

The AER consistently fails to uphold all aspects of the Objective of the National Electricity Law - which are to be treated equally - particularly the requirement to promote the long-term interests of consumers with an affordable, reliable, secure & safe electricity service.

Instead, it operates as a rubber stamp for predatory networks who they are enabling to manipulate the market.

•Deliberately Orchestrated ISP Delusion:

It's absolutely clear that the Australian Energy Regulator's whole ISP is flawed - with NO ENGINEERING FACTS, NO SCIENTIFIC RIGOUR, NO INTEGRITY, NO ETHICS, NO SOCIAL LICENCE, NO RELIABILITY, NO SECURITY, NO AFFORDABILITY.

"ECONOMIC LICENCE HAS BEEN FORGED!"

The ISP is:-

- Not Fit For Purpose
- Not Independent
- An Unmitigated Disaster
- Fatally Compromised
- DEAD & BURIED!

It is nothing but an ideologically compromised, torturous Roadmap to Blackouts and Skyrocketing, Unaffordable Cost Blowouts.

An IMMEDIATE MORATORIUM and ROYAL COMMISSION is essential!

Significant resignations are required for AER to stop their persistent, reckless ruination of Australia's once reliable, affordable, robust, resilient, and secure Electricity Grid.

TasNetworks' pass through application must be rejected in full as this is a textbook case of a network attempting to profit from its own operational negligence.

The regulator must stop functioning as a lapdog to monopoly interests and instead perform its legal duty to protect electricity consumers from unjust price increases.

No more socialising corporate failures.

No more rewarding incompetence.

No more blackout subsidies.

TasNetworks must absorb the storm costs as a lesson:

- Build resilient networks.
- Use Australian-made infrastructure.
- Get off the pathetic, unworkable, cost prohibitive, Ruinous RenewaBULL Roadmap to Extinction!

Yours Sincerely,
Lynette LaBlack