



# **Revised Regulatory Proposal**

## **Supporting Information: Wildlife Protection**

### **Aurora response to the AER's Draft Distribution Determination**

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## 1. Introduction

Aurora provided the AER with its *Regulatory Proposal* on 31 May 2011 in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 6 of the *Rules*. Aurora also set out its answers to the Regulatory Information Notice (RIN) issued by the AER on 21 April 2011 in its response (*RIN Response*) of 31 May 2011.

The AER have reviewed Aurora's *Regulatory Proposal* and *RIN Response* and provided Aurora with the AER's *Draft Distribution Determination*, associated consultant's reports and AER models on 29 November 2011 in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 6 of the *Rules*.

Aurora provides its *Revised Regulatory Proposal* to the AER in response to the AER's *Draft Distribution Determination* in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 6 of the *Rules*. This document provides specific supporting information as an appended attachment to Aurora's *Revised Regulatory Proposal*

## 2. Wildlife Protection (REINC)

### 2.1. Summary

In its *Regulatory Proposal*, Aurora proposed a wildlife protection program to identify and rectify sites where wildlife contact live assets and are killed.

The drivers for this program are protection of wildlife, especially those that are endangered.

In its *Aurora Revenue Review* report to the AER, the AER's consultant determined that this program was primarily related to addressing reliability with no explanation as to how this decision was arrived at. As a result of this, the AER has rejected this program.

Aurora contends that the AER's consultant made an error in assessing the driver of this program as reliability and not wildlife protection. Aurora contends that the program be included in Aurora's program of work for the forthcoming *Regulatory Control Period* and has been included in Aurora's *Revised Regulatory Proposal* forecasts.

### 2.2. Background

In its *Regulatory Proposal*, Aurora proposed two wildlife protection programs to identify and rectify sites where wildlife may come into contact with live assets.

One of the programs (SIWES) relates to an agreement with the Government (Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment) and this program (REINC) has the same drivers but work can be identified by sources other than the government (e.g. Landcare etc). This program is environmental protection and allows Aurora to respond promptly to community concerns.

Expenditure for this program is required for Aurora to discharge its environmental management obligations. In particular, this program is to install protection on Aurora infrastructure to prevent birds perching on the infrastructure being electrocuted. This expenditure was originally classified as a Regulatory Obligation or Requirement, because Aurora can face legal action should it be found to not take adequate precautions against injuring native wildlife. This was explicitly discussed with Nuttall Consulting when they were on site.

Nonetheless, in its *Aurora Revenue Review* report to the AER, the AER's consultant determined that this program was primarily related to addressing reliability with no explanation as to how this decision was arrived at. As a result of this, the AER rejected this program.

Aurora considers that the AER's consultant made an error in assessing the primary drivers of this program as reliability driven and not wildlife protection and considers that the program should be included in Aurora's program of work for the next Regulatory Control Period.

## **2.3. Conclusion**

Aurora contends that the AER has made an error in its decision to reject the wildlife protection program and Aurora has included the program in its *Revised Regulatory Proposal*.

### **3. Confidentiality**

Aurora does not consider any section of this document to be confidential.