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25 March 2003

Mr Sebastian Roberts
Acting General Manager
Regulatory Affairs – Electricity
ACCC
PO Box 1199
DICKSON ACT 2602

Dear Mr Roberts

We wish to make a submission to the ACCC Review of the Electricity Regulatory Test.

We are land-holders on the route of the proposed Millmerran – Middle Ridge overhead power line in South East Queensland, engaged in broad-acre farming, beef cattle and rearing dairy heifers. We consider ourselves to be forward thinking in our farming practices.

We understand from Powerlink that the guidelines for this proposed powerline are set by the ACCC, and that Powerlink's charter is to provide electricity to the consumer at the cheapest price. We believe that this charter is flawed and should be expanded to include the total social and economic costs incurred by affected land-holders and surrounding community. It is unfair for individual property owners affected by a power-line to bear the cost for the community benefit. These costs include lost production; devaluation of property values; restrictions in future development; increases in insurance premiums; reduction in value of superannuation (the property being considered part of a land-holders retirement investment); workplace health and safety issues; workers compensation insurance and the contentious issue of human and animal health.

The issue of compensation to land-holders is also flawed. No amount of compensation can cover the social cost, devaluation and visual degradation when there are alternatives – such as putting powerlines underground. We also believe that one-off compensation payments should be expanded to include annualised compensation payments to land-holders, to be reflected in the cost of power to consumers.

We strongly urge the ACCC to broaden the electricity regulatory test to include the total cost to the effected communities for electricity transmission.

Sincerely

Rob, Barbara & John Piper