

**Submission
No 123**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY
ZONES (REZ) ON RURAL AND REGIONAL
COMMUNITIES AND INDUSTRIES IN NEW SOUTH
WALES**

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Our experience from the HTP and the Renewable Energy transition so far in NSW

EnergyCo are in the process of easement acquisition through our land at
for the Hunter Transmission Project to facilitate the construction of a
500kV power-line between Bayswater power station and the central coast near Eraring power
station.

From the outset EnergyCo assurances were one thing but their processes were often
another. **Their narrative was so inconsistent, their word so unreliable... the
uncertainty of our situation required legal support.** We have had a year of dealing with
a government department that has little knowledge of the community and region in which its'
construction mission will shortly unfold. In skipping an SIA at the very outset EnergyCo has
made progress toward acquisition far slower and extremely difficult for itself. In my personal
case, as a terminal sufferer of Motor Neuron disease their tactics have proven to be highly
deleterious and contributing to my worsening health issues. In the grand scheme of things
that is neither here nor there – but as far as EnergyCo's efficient and on schedule
preproduction it is blatantly obvious that the resentment and acrimony they have spawned will
take a toll on their schedule and their budget.

Initial notification of the planned HTP was never received by us – it was via conversation
with a neighbour. When I made a call to EnergyCo's liaison officer (Shanthi Heard) it was
claimed that a mail out was sent – 14 months later still no sign.

The community engagement has been fragmented, aggressive, without care, sensitivity and
given many landowners are being severely impacted, losing land and homes, negotiation has
been completely devoid of compassion. The State Government and EnergyCo with total
legislative and legal power are widely perceived to be using autocratic force and bullying
tactics.

**For instance, our property shares a locked gate. Before access is granted, EnergyCo
coerced our farmer neighbour into using his duplicate key to gain access.**

Another specific; Access Forms are sent to us." We are told provisos are permissible.
OUR ONE PROVISIO is 'EnergyCo MUST NOT access neighbour's land via our
property.' Then WSP workers come we are told for an 'eco survey.' We repeat – no
access via us to neighbours – **It transpires the Eco survey is subterfuge.** Departing
WSP workers admit it's been a **"mapping visit" onto neighbour's land.**

**This deceit and m.o. of untruths has been a constant theme in our relationship
with EnergyCo -**

**Also there seems a lack of understanding of the impacts caused by the relocations
without consent.** In our discussions with EnergyCo we found that from their foot soldiers
right up to ex CEO James Hay, it was clear that the organisation has been clearly buying
their own **inaccurate** PR. **For example, a letter we received from one of their execs
on October 18th was fanciful to say the least; "The HTP SIA identifies impacted
landholders and includes vulnerable people through targeted engagement..." FACT IS; not
one SIA "targeted engagement" had or ever came our way. **There was at that stage
no SIA existing on the HTP. Only in December or thereabouts did Energyco hire a
consultancy to do a rush SIA.****

In regard to my disability EnergyCo were consistently insensitive, heavy handed and denying
me the aids my condition required –eg; **MAY 15th** Millfield Hall at a complex map meet

I asked permission to audio record as my condition often makes retention difficult and it was denied– the denial was then backed by others. We were shown a map with adjusted impact on our land, I asked; “can we have a copy of that?” I’m told flatly “No.”

I was often denied updated maps, fair notice of meetings – then without warning, June 20th at a PUBLIC MEETING at Cessnock a PUBLIC UNVEILING of HTP changes making our dwelling unliveable. The new corridor shift by over 400m closer to our dwelling making it arguably health hazardous. was a devastating revelation with no prior warning.

We demanded a meeting - Sydney ENERGYCO. I have a screenshot of the corridor map surprise revealed at Cessnock. The moment I show it, CEO HAY says; “That was a mistake.”

28th June; The day after Hay declared the CORRIDOR a mistake, two project supervisors meet neighbour Ben Still with a map of the same corridor. My neighbour texts me the map of the MISTAKE Corridor saying; “either corridor is bad for us” and confirming a meeting he’s just had – surely this is more ‘secret state’ stuff – not NSW govt., run projects.

JULY 10 another Sydney meeting - A new map now shows FIVE corridors. I ask to retain a map copy – in granting my request Tim warns me; “Just don’t show your neighbours.” This is a recurrent theme of landowner- EnergyCo relationships – fighting for honesty and transparency.

The whole approach of EnergyCo seems divisive and adversarial. My wife and I have found as you can see, the dealings of Energy Co to be somewhat chaotic, self-contradictory and often based on untruths. Their treatment has also added to my MND degeneration (my neurologist will back this)- after years of holding it at bay. Surely under our supposedly caring and humane system we can do better.