
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30/07/2020 11:28:37 a.m.
To: Feedback Aurora Plan [feedbackauroraplan@comcom.govt.nz]
Subject: [REDACTED] on Aurora

July 25, 2020

Aurora Energy

This is my input into the current Aurora Energy proposal to increase prices to maintain the distribution network.

I worked for the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I began as an [REDACTED] continued as a [REDACTED]
and worked for several years as an [REDACTED] I am therefore
very familiar with the beginnings of Aurora Energy.
The problem.

Aurora's problem can not be addressed unless its origins are considered. In the late 1980s the government of New Zealand, very unwisely, chose to adopt a number of neo-conservative practices. One was the privatization of the electricity generation, distribution and sales network. There was no need at all to do this. The rule should have been, if it ain't broke don't fix it. The privatization and break up of the electrical network was done without the full agreement of New Zealanders. The set up of the Dunedin City Council Electricity Department was working well, and of course it was non-profit and its actions were subject to City Councilors and managers. The true owners of the Dunedin electricity network were the consumers and rate payers.

Aurora took over the distribution network and over the years extended it into Otago. Although I was living and working in British Columbia Canada at the time I had a keen interest in the proceedings. Aurora became part of Dunedin City Holding Company. Accountability became a large problem for consumers. We can say there was more or less no accountability. At this point it should be obvious that a lack of morals was at play. Much has been written in the local newspapers etc about all this.

At some point the management of Aurora, and or the Dunedin City Council and its holdings company, decided on a cunning plan. Do not spend money on maintaining the electricity distribution network and instead send as much income as possible to the Dunedin City Council. To me this was pure and simple corruption, but it was covered over by the structures under which Aurora operated.

What to do now.

1. The government of New Zealand must issue an order that under no circumstances will any moneys in future be sent from Aurora or Delta (the lines company). This must be done because of the original corrupt decisions taken not to maintain the network.
2. The government of New Zealand must take some of the responsibility for the current situation.
3. Even though there is no possibility of Aurora/Delta improving the network quickly (the lack of proper maintenance has been on going for 30 or 40 years) there are further things Aurora could do to improve the situation. ie. Many of the old wooden poles do not have possum preventers. These should be installed because possums climb the poles and cause power outages. Aurora should report ALL power outages both online and in the local newspapers. At present Aurora does report outages on their website but not very well and in the case of our house location Aurora only reports about half the outages. Presumably they do this to hide the real situation even from themselves.
4. Aurora could tell the public the true current situation regarding the state of the whole network; what and where are the weakest points, how can things be repaired more quickly, etc.

You have most likely noted that a large percentage of responders to Aurora's proposals said that rate increases should not be used to cover over previous mistakes and decisions. It is very pleasing to see that people are not as stupid as Aurora thinks.

The basic problem is beyond the Commerce Commission, it is political. The structure of Aurora and Delta within the Dunedin City Council must be changed.

You may also be interested to know that in British Columbia, Canada, the electrical supply is run by BC Hydro. This is like a crown corporation. The population of British Columbia is about the same as New Zealand. The electrical supply is mostly hydro generated. BC Hydro generates, distributes and sells about 90 per cent of the electricity. The cost for

one domestic unit (kwhr) of electricity is about three time less than the cost of a unit in New Zealand. The high cost in New Zealand in the result of the privatization of the New Zealand network.

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