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**Sent:** 29/11/2020 4:12:52 p.m.  
**To:** Feedback Aurora Plan [feedbackauroraplan@comcom.govt.nz]  
**Subject:** Feedback on Aurora investment plan

The following feedback has been received on the Aurora investment plan:

### **Introduction**

Please provide your email address if you want to be kept up to date with our assessment:



### **Revenue smoothing**

Please indicate whether you agree with our draft decision to apply Scenario 1 and describe what you see as the benefits to consumers of this scenario. If you instead prefer Scenario 2, please outline your reasons and describe what you see as the consumer benefits of deferring revenues, even if it means paying an interest cost later.:

I understand an increase is necessary for maintenance but believe the increase should be the same across the 3 areas. I have little confidence in Aurora holding to the no more than 10% limit . I agree the 5 year plan would be best but it will be very difficult for a number of elderly on fixed incomes in our community, some have already raised concerns about how they will cover this cost. In many cases it will be a choice between food or heat as \$20-\$30 is a lot of extra money to them. I also think Dunedin City Council should definitely be contributing to the cost of maintenance and should not have been allowed to drag money from Aurora as dividends at the expense of Central Otago in particular. If they did this perhaps the increase could be kept lower.

### **Monitoring Aurora's delivery**

Would our proposals provide you with enough information to know whether Aurora is delivering its plan and improving its performance? If no, why not and what further or alternative information would you require to achieve this?:

I agree with the proposed measures to make Aurora more accountable but feel the Commerce Commission will have to monitor this closely as they have already shown that they will fudge figures to suit their own needs. eg not including GST and inflation in their initial estimate of line increases I think that things like that show a deep seated dishonesty. I also think if they breach there needs to be a very real deterrent. I don't think after listening to comments at the meeting that they would be concerned even by a 5 million dollar fine. There appears to be a real lack of management skills at top level in the company. There also appears to be no accountability even when they produce reports to actually have to deliver or explain when targets aren't met.

### **Network outages**

We are interested in your view of the impacts of setting outage targets at this level, and whether you consider it to be reasonable given the state of Aurora's network.:

It wouldn't matter what target you set until they learn to communicate more effectively with consumers and respond in a more timely manner. The fact that they wanted the targets to be less than you are looking at setting speaks a lot to the character of those in charge. Even when they do have planned outages sometimes they do not happen and no communication with consumers who have at times gone to lengths and expense to cover themselves.

Then several days later there is an outage that was not expected. They have no consideration at all for their customers. Unplanned outages such as what happened in Clyde are going to happen but we heard at the meeting that Dunedin and Queenstown both have had upgrades and have backup sub stations. Why have Central Otago residents been left behind. This lack could have deadly repercussions for our elderly. Another consideration is that we have one of the coldest winters in the country and because of clean air legislation and many households rely totally on electricity.

### **Capital spending**

Do you think our approach to Aurora's growth projects is the right one, given the current uncertainty with electricity demand in Otago?:

I know capital spending is necessary but like to see some accountability also for purchasing. They should be able to prove they are getting the best value for our money by eg tendering for equipment and upgrades etc. They have to be kept accountable

### **Operating spending**

Do you think our assessment of Aurora's operating spending properly accounts for its capabilities and business costs?:

After listening to the Commerce Commission it appears they do not have the power to address all the issues that consumers have. There is so much they cannot do. Even the gentleman from the Electricity Authority did not really seem interested in addressing the equality of the proposed increases. In Central Otago we should not have to keep subsidising Dunedin and Queenstown's progress which is how it feels to us. There need to be an independent body with the ability to take a long hard look at the way Dunedin City Council has acted with Aurora. They should never have been allowed to keep taking money out (as dividends) when the network was not being kept fit for purpose. It is totally immoral and there should be someone who can intervene and look at how they operate as the owners of Aurora. Also salaries of CEO's and Directors should be looked into as they are certainly not performing in anything like a responsible accountable manner.

### **Further comments**

Is there anything else you want to bring to the Commission's attention?: