

Date: 9 November 2009

Your Ref:

Enquiries: Garry Hunt  
9400 4556

Our Ref: 58527

INW09/488838



Hon Max Trenorden MLC,  
Chairman  
Standing Committee on Public Administration  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
4 Harvest Terrace  
WEST PERTH WA 6005



Dear Mr Trenorden

### INQUIRY INTO WOODEN POWER POLES

Thank you for your letter of 25 September 2009, addressed to the Mayor, requesting comments on any issues the City may have had with Western Power or Horizon Power relevant to the terms of reference of the Inquiry. I apologise for the delay in responding and now provide the following comments:

#### Item 3 - Current wood distribution pole management practices:

- **Old and Leaning Poles**

The City receives many comments from ratepayers about the poor standard and apparent lack of maintenance of poles for overhead power and street lighting in local roads, and particularly in older suburbs such as Sorrento, Greenwood, Warwick, Hillarys, Padbury, Craigie and Kallaroo.

- **Maintenance Incentives**

There are no incentives within the street light tariff to improve maintenance procedures or the reliability of overhead power systems, poles, luminaires and on-going faults. The City still pays its fixed monthly and yearly charge regardless of the number of faults and the length of time it takes to repair faults. The City believes there should be performance clauses built into the tariff so that maintenance is effectively targeted and efficiently undertaken.

**Item 7 - Any other relevant matter:**

- **Energy Efficiency**  
The City has no input into the types of fittings, technology, energy reduction features or sustainability of the overhead power and lighting system. Many areas of Western Power's overhead street lighting system within the City uses outdated and energy inefficient mercury vapour lamps and luminaires. The City would be keen to know whether Western Power has a plan to replace these lamps/luminaires with more energy efficient lighting that would reduce the City's energy costs.
- **Aerial Bundled Cable**  
Western Power has upgraded many of the existing aerial cables in local roads of coastal suburbs of the City with insulated aerial bundled cable, to reduce corrosion and improve reliability. At the same time, the existing timber poles were also replaced presumably due to age of the pole and increased loading from the new cable. The City holds concerns that the cost of this new infrastructure is not invested into underground power schemes with the remaining cost then being shared with the Office of Energy and the property owner to improve the reliability and reduce maintenance costs of the power and lighting system.
- **Stay Poles**  
Western Power uses timber stay poles to provide tension to overhead power lines at T-junctions and other locations. When replacing stay poles which are located in the middle of a suburban lot or in reserves, the City believes Western Power should offer the option of relocating the stay poles to a more convenient location, such as opposite a common side boundary or away from a well used bike path. This can be at a minimal cost to Western Power, as tension lines can be easily lengthened or shortened, yet it would provide improved amenity for the owner or user of a facility. The process should also allow sufficient time for owner consultation and feedback.

I trust these comments are of use to the Committee.

Yours sincerely



**GARRY HUNT**  
Chief Executive Officer