



Enquiries: Mr Jon Offer – (08) 9345 8714

Our Ref: 2174074

12 October 2009

PUBLIC

Hon Max Trenorden MLC
Chairman
Parliament House
GPO Box A11
PERTH WA 6837

Dear Hon Max Trenorden

INQUIRY INTO WOODEN POWER POLES

Thank you for your letter dated 24 September 2009 requesting comment from the City on any issues it may have had with Western Power that are relevant to the terms of reference of the inquiry – Distribution Wood Pole Audit Review (May 2009).

The City would like to respond to your letter addressing point seven; any other relevant matter.

The City is concerned Western Power has non frangible wooden and steel distribution poles in close proximity to the kerb line of the road reserve. The location of the poles create a potential risk of injury or death to the road user should a collision occur. The poles often inhibit the City's traffic management works and can be cost prohibitive for the City to have relocated. The City considers any maintenance or remedial works conducted by Western Power on the distribution network, should consider pole locations for a safe distance off the road reserve kerb, or prioritise alternatives; such as undergrounding of the distribution network.

The City of Stirling fully supports the undergrounding of the Western Power distribution infrastructure, via the State Government initiative, the State Underground Power Program (SUPP) in partnership with the Office of Energy and Western Power. The continuous rollout of this project in the metropolitan area would eliminate non frangible distribution network timber/steel poles from streetscapes. However, more recently the City has noted Western Power for operational purposes performs undergrounding of the distribution network at specific locations; generally the City is unaware of these proposals or given advance notice.

The City's Operations Department has expressed concern with Western Powers works at the interface of the undergrounded power with the overhead distribution network, whereby damage to the verge and other assets maintained by the City occurs. Western Power and its Contractors can take up to several months to rectify or reinstate verges and assets to the City's satisfaction. Often the City has to make good the repairs because of long



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delays and denial from Western Power. Once the City has taken the responsibility to rectify damage, it is difficult to seek reimbursement from Western Power and its Contractors.

The City believes Western Power should have a strategy to amalgamate funds allocated for maintenance of the overhead distribution network and pole replacement with funding for undergrounding of the distribution network, this may achieve a faster rollout of undergrounding power eliminating the wooden power poles.

Should you or your staff have any further enquiries regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the City's Special Projects and Support Engineer, Jon Offer, on 9345 8714.

Yours sincerely



Geoff Eves

DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE