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**Hon Bill Johnston MLA
Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Energy; Corrective Services;
Industrial Relations**

Our Ref: 71-23776

Mr Steve Edwell
Chair
Economic Regulatory Authority

Email: Steve.Edwell@erawa.com.au

Dear Mr ^{Steve} Edwell

I write in advance of the determination of Western Power's fifth access arrangement (AA5) funding by the Economic Regulatory Authority (ERA).

As you would no doubt be aware, a number of customers on the South West Interconnected System (SWIS) experienced power outages during the Christmas weekend heatwave, with maximum daily temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius.

Community members impacted by the recent power outages in both metropolitan and regional areas have made it clear that they expect Western Power to do more to both avoid and respond to outages in hot weather. Western Power advises that the network's resilience is being tested by more frequent extreme weather events due to climate change, such as heatwaves. At the same time, a growing portion of Western Power's assets are ageing and need replacement.

Whilst I understand that it is not possible to avoid all equipment failures, I am committed to seeking the most reliable and sustainable power supply for Western Australians. This includes advocating that Western Power has the appropriate funding for network investment, operations and maintenance in an evolving operating environment.

I therefore request that the ERA take the community's expectations around reliability, and the investment needs of the network to keep the lights on, while reviewing Western Power's AA5 submission. I believe the ERA does not currently apply the same value to reliability as the wider community.

I believe that this is an opportune moment for the ERA to consider the importance of valuing network resilience as a key benefit, and hope that you will ensure community concerns regarding current preparedness are appropriately recognised.

Yours sincerely

**Hon Bill Johnston MLA,
Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Energy;
Corrective Services; Industrial Relations**

15 FEB 2022

WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Laid on the Table of the
Legislative Assembly

24 FEB 2022

This paper should not be
removed from the Chamber