



Powerlines Action Group Eumundi Inc

Coordinator's report

This is PAGE's first annual report and I can safely say that we have had a tough, but thoroughly engaging 15 months since the State Government and Powerlink forced their way into the daily lives of this community. I believe that we have provided them with a response and a challenge to the approach they usually take to communities that they were not expecting. It is important that we look back at the mission that we set out with at the beginning of the year and see what we have achieved against that goal.

Mission statement

PAGE is lobbying the State Government and its agencies to devise more sustainable and visually acceptable alternatives to Powerlink's current proposal for unsustainable transmission lines through Eerwah Vale and a substation at Eumundi. PAGE is doing this by reviewing renewable energy options, demand management, alternative routes and undergrounding the lines. PAGE's alternatives address the short to medium term needs of the electricity network, while seeking viable and sustainable long-term solutions that are more in keeping with Council and community thinking.

Achievements

Lobbying Activities – PAGE has met with the following representatives and raised with them the alternative proposals and the major issues in Powerlink's consultation process.

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| Lobbying Meetings |
| Peter Wellington, State MP for Nicklin We have met on several occasions and have had very vocal & public support and advice from local state member Peter Wellington; including raising our concerns with Premier Bligh and Minister for Mines & Energy, Geoff Wilson. |
| Sunshine Coast Regional Council Meetings held with Cllrs. Vivien Griffin, Keryn Jones, Paul Tatton & Lew Brennan and Mayor Bob Abbot. The Council has publicly declared their support for PAGE and sustainable solutions, as well as providing much needed assistance. |
| State government Meeting held with the Minister for Mines & Energy, Geoff Wilson & Departmental Advisers, who agreed to consider commercially viable alternatives put up by PAGE. Response sent in November with Sanctuary Energy report attached. |
| Liberal National Party Met with the Leader of the Opposition, Lawrence Springborg & Shadow Minister for Climate Change & Clean Energy, Dave Gibson who supported the PAGE alternatives. We also met with the Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Fiona Simpson. PAGE has met with David Gibson on several occasions and he remains supportive and keenly interested in the Clean Energy alternatives being proposed by PAGE. |
| Federal politicians Met with federal politicians including Queensland Senator Claire Moore and Leader of the Nationals, Warren Truss. |
| Powerlink & their paid environmental consultants, Parsons Brinckerhoff Numerous meetings held with Powerlink and Parsons Brinckerhoff in order to represent the views of the community in relation to the inadequate consultation process and the lack of prior consideration of solutions which do not entail building a new powerline. Providing on-site support to landholders at meetings on their properties with Powerlink or their paid consultants. |
| Conservation councils Have met with the coordinators of the Queensland Conservation Council and their local counterpart the Sunshine Coast Environment Council. |



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Letter writing

Many hundreds of letters have been written to politicians at all levels of Government, including the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, Minister for the Environment, Peter Garrett, Minister for Climate Change, Penny Wong. State Ministers Stephen Robertson, Andrew McNamarra, Desley Boyle, Geoff Wilson and the opposition members Dave Gibson, Fiona Simpson and Glenn Elmes.

Terms of reference submission

PAGE completed a comprehensive submission to the terms of reference for this project and actively encouraged the community and local councils to prepare submissions.

Impact on the Powerlink project

Powerlink's original schedule had the final Environmental Impact Statement being released in mid 2008. At this stage the community is still waiting for the draft EIS to be released, with Powerlink unwilling to provide a specific date for publishing. PAGE has pushed for an open and transparent consultation process, with limited success to date. However, active engagement by PAGE and the community in this flawed process has caused Powerlink and its paid consultants, Parsons Brinckerhoff significant additional work and enabled PAGE to raise the inadequacy of the consultation process directly with the Minister for Mines & Energy.

Media & communications:

PAGE has achieved considerable local media coverage with 60 articles and letters in the local papers, on TV & radio. This is an extremely important avenue for PAGE to broaden the campaign and to have our voice heard. The politicians and state bureaucrats receive copies of these media articles either via media monitoring services or directly from PAGE.

PAGE has a comprehensive website, with current news items, significant correspondence, links, information and contact details, which has been built from scratch since November last year – it can be accessed [HYPERLINK "http://www.saveeumundi.org"](http://www.saveeumundi.org) www.saveeumundi.org and PAGE can be emailed at [HYPERLINK "mailto:contact@saveeumundi.org"](mailto:contact@saveeumundi.org) contact@saveeumundi.org.

PAGE has issued seven community newsletters and held six community meetings to November this year, keeping members and interested community members up-to-date on the progress of the campaign, enabling them to share their thoughts, concerns and make suggestions on the campaign. In addition, PAGE holds regular fortnightly committee meetings, which all members of PAGE are welcome and encouraged to attend.

PAGE successfully organised the Eumundi – Noosa leg of the GetUp! Climate torch relay in September, involving local community members & Noosa District State High School students. This is part of an ongoing community awareness campaign including presentations and talking to community members in Cooroy, at the Noosa Farmers market and other local events and gatherings.

Fund raising activities:

PAGE is a not-for-profit community organisation and relies upon membership fees, donations and fund raising activities such as sausage sizzles and raffles. PAGE has conducted nine sausage sizzles and four successful raffles to date.

These events would not take place without the tireless work spent organizing them and the numerous volunteers that generously donate their time to make them happen and my thanks go out to all those that have helped over the year.

I would also like to thank all of those people and organisations that have generously donated or contributed to PAGE including Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Glenford Tools, Carlos Sanchez and Cathy Fitzgerald, Australia Zoo, IGA Cooroy, Everglade Cruises, Susie and James Chandler,



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Janet Luttrell, Rob's Bakery - Eumundi, Pomona Butchers, Hodges, Bakehouse Eumundi, Maroochy Springs Winery, Eumundi Markets, Noosa Farmers Market and the Eumundi & District Community Association.

The backbone of PAGE – the volunteers

Without the tireless effort of the PAGE committee and the many volunteers who make things happen, we would not be a community or an organisation. The finances of the organisation just show the tip of the very large iceberg that is PAGE.

Since the start of the campaign volunteers have contributed well in excess of an estimated 12,750 hours to PAGE, in addition to thousands of phone calls and many thousands of kilometers driven, sandwiches, cups of tea made. At a very conservative hourly rate of \$30/hr this equates a community contribution in excess of \$380,000. An amazing amount I think we would all agree.

community, region and state!

As is the case with many organisations, the bulk of this contribution falls on a few individuals. We are always looking for people to help out and contribute in many different ways from fund raising, letter writing, sizzling a sausage or more specialist areas such a legal, environmental, or energy expertise.

Alternatives:

An enormous amount of effort has been put into researching clean energy, demand management and alternative routes. I am particularly pleased that PAGE was instrumental in organising the Sunshine Coast Energy Planning day held on 17 September with Energex, Sanctuary Energy, the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and other energy professionals. This Day assessed the energy issues on the Coast and developed alternatives to Powerlink's current proposal.

Any alternatives must be proposed by Australian Energy Regulator (AER) regulated energy companies and subjected to the "Regulatory Test" and be submitted to the AER for independent review. Powerlink are proposing to submit their project to the regulatory test in 2010, if it is approved by the Minister for Mines and Energy and the easements designated as community infrastructure. Sanctuary Energy or any other regulated energy company can submit alternative proposals to the AER for consideration of alternatives to Powerlink's current proposal.

Clean energy

The alternatives proposed to date include a solar-thermal power plant, "bankable" demand management (pre-agreed reductions in electricity consumption at peak times by significant energy users) and local renewable generation capacity on the Sunshine Coast. These alternatives are being further investigated by Sanctuary Energy, a regulated electricity retailer and generator, with a view to providing a report to the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and PAGE. The report will be sent to the Minister for Mines & Energy, and the LNP for further consideration and discussion. These alternatives are commercially viable, based on proven technology and provide security of supply required by the Minister for Mines and Energy and his government-owned corporations, Powerlink and Energex.

Alternative routes

PAGE has also proposed alternative routes for this type of infrastructure for consideration by Powerlink which, in PAGE's opinion, would be significantly less expensive and less environmentally damaging than the current proposal. We are still waiting for a response from Powerlink, which they have refused to discuss in advance of the release of the draft EIS.

Statement of intent



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PAGE will continue working towards a positive solution for the energy future of the Sunshine Coast by:

- Continuing to lobby and discuss sustainable clean energy alternatives with State and Federal politicians, demonstrating how the alternatives promoted by PAGE are aligned with Labor's "towards Q2" vision and the LNP's renewable energy vision for 2015,
- Continuing to work closely with Sanctuary Energy in progressing the clean energy solutions to delivery within the Australian Energy Regulatory framework,
- Working closely with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council in promoting the clean energy solutions and alternative clean energy in line with the Council's "most sustainable region in Australia" vision,
- Continuing to work with local state members Peter Wellington and David Gibson to promote our alternative solutions and raising the communities concerns over the consultation processes and forced acquisition of land,
- Continuing to build alliances and constructive relationships with community organisations including the Noosa Biosphere Board, Noosa Parks Association, OSCAR, Noosa Residents and Ratepayers Association and the Sunshine Coast Environment Council,
- Continuing to positively assist the community to complete submissions through the Powerlink "consultation" process,
- Continuing to provide on-the-ground assistance to landholders and community members in their dealings with Powerlink and its paid consultants Parsons Brinckerhoff, and
- Continuing to work with the media to deliver the key messages of unacceptable State Government community consultation and the need for positive clean and environmentally sustainable energy solutions.

I look forward to your continuing support over the next year.

Graham Smith,
Coordinator,
Powerlines Action Group Eumundi Inc