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9 June 2003

Gas Pipelines Inquiry
Commerce Commission
PO Box 2351
WELLINGTON

Dear Sir

Gas Pipelines Inquiry

Federated Farmers of New Zealand (Inc) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the “process for the gas pipelines inquiry”.

Federated Farmers is a primary sector organisation that represents approximately 18,000 farmers and various other rural businesses. Federated Farmers has a long history of representing the needs and interests of New Zealand’s farming communities, primary producers and agricultural exporters.

Gas pipelines and other fixed utilities (notably electricity lines and telecommunications equipment) are either stationed, or run through the properties of private landowners, many of whom are members of Federated Farmers.

Federated Farmers has two concerns. One relates to the legal status of easements. The other relates to the significant impact on landowners if limited access to pipelines leads to the construction of further lines.

With regard to the first matter, the Federation understands that in a number of cases involving existing gas pipelines, that the Public Works Act was used to place pipelines. For this, some farmers may have been offered compensation for the loss of rights from the establishment of pipeline “corridors”.

The Federation is concerned that in the absence of a memorandum to the contrary, the land within the gas pipeline corridor could potentially be used as part of the Crown’s settlement package when dealing with Maori historical grievances.


The Federation wishes to make clear in the strongest possible way that any private land used for the purposes of establishing gas pipelines should include a memorandum preventing such land from being used to settle Maori historical grievances. Not to do so would not only breach the Crown’s commitment to protect the property rights of

private landowners, but could also potentially complicate farmers' ability to utilise their land efficiently.

On the other matter, the possibility of constructing parallel pipelines and the likelihood of additional safety margins could lead to a substantial loss of productive land with significant impact on the remaining business. It is important that the policy regime allows for sufficient access for all generators and avoids duplication of pipelines.

The Federation is prepared to elaborate on its concerns upon request.

Yours sincerely



Catherine Petrey
Executive Director, Policy