

Before the Proposed Te Tai o Poutini Plan – A Combined District Plan for the West Coast: Hearings Panel

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act)

In the matter of The Proposed Te Tai o Poutini Plan: A Combined District Plan for the West Coast – Hearing Topic

- **Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity**

Between **Te Tai o Poutini Plan Committee**
Comprising the Buller, Grey and Westland Councils

And **Transpower New Zealand Limited**
Submitter 299 and Further Submitter FS110

Post Hearing Response to Hearing Panel Following Hearing Topic Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity – November 2024

Dated 27 November 2024

- 1.1. The following responds (on a without prejudice basis) to a request from the Hearings Panel during the appearance by Transpower NZ Ltd at the Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity Hearing on 21 November 2024. The request relates to whether a 5 year timeframe (as an exclusion within an Indigenous Vegetation Clearance/disturbance definition) would be sufficient for Transpower, and the potential scope within the Transpower submission for any exclusion. These matters are addressed in turn:

Frequency

- 1.1.1. While the frequency of any vegetation disturbance and clearance works will be dependent on the vegetation type/species, growth rate and landowner agreements, a five-year frequency would be considered sufficient and appropriate within the West Coast context in relation to Transpower's activities.

Scope

- 1.1.2. In relation to scope within the Transpower submission, while Transpower did not submit on the specific definition of 'Indigenous Vegetation Clearance', it submitted¹ on rule ECO-R1 *Indigenous vegetation clearance and disturbance outside of the coastal environment* as notified which provided a permitted rule for "*The maintenance, operation, and repair of lawfully established tracks, fences, structures, buildings, critical infrastructure, network utilities, renewable electricity generation activities or natural hazard mitigation activities*". The rule was supported, with amendment sought to include 'upgrade' and make specific reference to the National Grid.
- 1.1.3. A change to the associated definition would arguably be in scope of the relief sought in S299.075 in that it would give effect to the relief sought in the Transpower submission to permit vegetation clearance and disturbance works associated with existing National Grid assets.

Transpower New Zealand Ltd November 2024

¹ Submission point S299.075