

**Media Release from North East Pylon Pressure campaign
(NEPP)**

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***' Underground is cheaper, safer and more
reliable' - Anti-pylon campaigners brief Stormont
Environment Committee***

A delegation from the North East Pylon Pressure campaign (NEPP) in the Republic has briefed members of the Northern Ireland Assembly's Environment Committee, at Stormont, on the case for putting proposed high power electricity cables linking North and South underground.

The delegation included Professor Friedhelm Noack, of the University of Ilmenau, Germany, author of the comprehensive ASKON Consulting Group study which has recommended underground cables as the cheaper, safer, more reliable and more environmentally sensitive alternative to giant pylons and overhead wires.

Professor Noack is a leading world authority on major electricity transmission and distribution systems and he has helped to design and build both overhead and underground systems.

The Professor told the Members, chaired by Mr Patsy McGlone MLA, that his report had been compiled to meet the criteria set by NIE and EirGrid for long distance transmission of high voltage electricity. It was the only report on the proposed North – South interconnector where the research for an appropriate had been conducted on the ground and designed for a specific, workable route.

Professor Noack said underground cables would be more reliable and secure in the grid system than overhead lines and the failure rate in underground cables are significantly lower than in overhead lines.

He told the Committee members: *'There is a real saving to consumers because an underground system is considerably more efficient than overhead. Therefore less electricity is wasted through generating heat lost to the air. The specific underground system proposed in the ASKON Report can be established at an affordable cost when compared with an overhead Line option. There is a higher initial investment cost, but this difference is cancelled out by the much higher losses of electricity in overhead lines over a 45 year life cycle'*.

The North East Pylon Pressure (NEPP) campaign is a community-based organisation across counties Monaghan, Cavan and Meath which are affected by the joint NIE / EirGrid proposal. The campaign derives its mandate from the 45,000 people, organised in about thirty local committees, who favour underground cables as the means of electricity transmission. The Group maintains links and co-operates closely with SEAT anti-pylons campaign in counties Armagh and Tyrone.

- **ENDS** -

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