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Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
National Security Group

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To Whom it May Concern

Meridian's response to the Critical Infrastructure Phase 1 consultation

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Critical Infrastructure consultation and are pleased to see that this important topic is at the forefront of resilience work.

By way of background, Meridian is Aotearoa's largest electricity generator, producing energy from 100 percent renewable sources – wind, water, and sun. Our hydro stations generate enough electricity to power around 1.4 million homes each year and our wind farms generate enough electricity to power around 152,000 homes each year. Meridian is also a major nationwide retailer through our Meridian and Powershop brands.

Meridian agrees that the risk to critical infrastructure is elevated in New Zealand, and likely to remain so, as climate change increasingly impacts weather patterns and landscape. We also agree that significant amounts of investment in infrastructure will be needed to improve resilience in the face of future challenges and disasters. Recent analysis by BCG estimated the cost of Aotearoa's investment in electricity infrastructure out to 2050 to be \$131 billion.¹ The increasing threat of cyber attacks means that cyber security will play a crucial role in safeguarding our critical infrastructure. We have made, and continue to make, significant investments in our cybersecurity capabilities. This investment is designed to strengthen our resilience and ability to protect our critical infrastructure from potential cyber threats.

Lifeline utilities such as electricity operate under a social licence. As part of this, there is pressure to deliver very high levels of reliability. We agree that delivering high levels of resilience in New Zealand's critical infrastructure is increasingly important, and Meridian will play its part in the national interests.

We would also like to encourage the project team to work closely with key regulators and subject matter experts (such as the Electricity Authority and the Infrastructure Commission), as well as with industry groups (such as the electricity CEO forum). Putting challenges to groups such as these could help to identify what could be better about New Zealand's resiliency, and how this can be achieved in ways that are practical, efficient, and cost-effective.

This submission can be released in full. I am also happy to be contacted to discuss the points raised in submission, as are my team.

Nāku noa, nā



Neal Barclay
Chief Executive
Meridian Energy Limited

¹ [the-future-is-electric-full-report-october-2022.pdf \(bcg.com\)](#)