

## **Transpower Says NZ Industry Is Contingency Planning**

Speaking on behalf of the industry in New Zealand, Transpower says the electricity industry is contingency planning for measures to be put in place this winter if the current severe drought conditions continue and the hydro lakes remain low. The NZ Electricity Commission says that the current hydro levels have dropped below the Minzone – an analytical tool that helps the electricity system planners understand what is happening with the hydro storage levels. Transpower chief executive Patrick Strange says that NZ has experienced drought this year in both the North and South Islands, which has resulted in very low inflows into the hydro lakes. “In the case of Lake Taupo, the seasonal inflows are the lowest ever recorded. We also had the unexpected closure of the New Plymouth thermal generating plant; the Stratford plant out for a scheduled mid-life maintenance; a unit out at Huntly and Huntly also experiencing some constraints due to river temperature,” he says. “All of these have meant that the generators had to use more hydro to power the system, and this has put pressure on storage,” adds Strange. He says the industry is keeping a close watch on the situation and it feels that given the current environment, it is prudent for the industry to put some preparatory plans in place so that it can cover the ‘what ifs’ in the unlikely event they were to eventuate. “The industry is working well together to ensure that the power system remains secure this coming winter. It is important to note that, although we are initiating planning measures now, there is still plenty of time for it to rain – and rain will help the situation – before we need to implement any of the demand side initiatives,” says Strange.

[Source: essa news]