

## The Coalition for Community Energy supports the proposal by PIAC, TEC and TAI.

The Coalition for Community Energy welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the AEMC's consultation paper on the Wholesale Demand Response mechanism rule change.

The Coalition for Community Energy is a network of over 100 organisations working to grow a vibrant community energy sector. Community energy groups and projects are operational in all parts of Australia. They are actively increasing the uptake of renewable energy in their communities, reducing emissions, reducing energy costs, stimulating local investment and hoping to build a better energy system.

We support the rule change request proposed by the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, The Australia Institute and the Total Environment Centre (ERC0247 / RRC0023) because it is the only proposal that will sufficiently empower community energy groups to deliver the benefits they strive for within the market environment.

Community energy groups are delivering rooftop solar, batteries and locally scaled renewable power stations. Access to wholesale markets can improve the value of these investments.

Community energy groups are helping consumers with decisions that reduce their energy bills, including retail market choices, energy efficiency and demand management. Access to wholesale markets would provide new opportunities to reduce the bills of many vulnerable people in our communities.

Community Energy groups are partnering with local councils, technology companies and other NGOs to innovate around local energy systems and add value to regional economies. These are not traditional energy market participants and they need to be empowered to participate in the market and realise the benefits of innovation.

Heather Smith

Chair, Coalition for Community Energy



## 1. ABOUT THE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY ENERGY

The Coalition for Community Energy (C4CE) is a network of over 100 organisations and projects working to grow a vibrant community energy sector. ([see here for the full list](#)).

C4CE facilitates collaborative [Strategic Initiatives](#) that build on the strengths of its member organisations ~ community energy projects, groups, support organisations and stakeholders in the wider renewable and mainstream energy system ~ to create mutually beneficial outcomes. C4CE fosters win-win situations and in so doing is creating a quicker, more efficient path to a community energy sector with hundreds of community energy projects that benefit all Australian communities.

### C4CE's objectives are to:

- Guide and support development of the community energy sector
- Create a coordinated voice to better advocate for the needs of the sector
- Grow the sector's profile, influence and membership (beyond the 'usual suspects')
- Facilitate the alignment of efforts by Members with support, systems, tools and training which enable collaboration for collective impact
- Identify and create strategic opportunities and attract investment for the sector
- Coordinate strategic initiatives which build the knowledge, know-how and capacity of Members and the sector.

## 2. WHAT IS COMMUNITY ENERGY?

In the National Community Energy Strategy, C4CE defines community energy as follows:

*Community Energy is the term used to describe the wide range of ways that communities can develop, deliver and benefit from sustainable energy. It can involve supply-side projects such as renewable energy installations and storage, and demand-side projects such as community education, energy efficiency and demand management. Community energy can even include community-based approaches to selling or distributing energy.*

*Community energy projects encompass a range of technologies and activities across a breadth of scales, determined by the community needs, availability of local natural resources, technologies and funding, and community support.<sup>1</sup>*

It is particularly important to note that community energy is not defined technically, such as based on the scale of a clean energy project (e.g. a community-scale solar farm), but rather based around community participation and benefit.

In academic literature, Walker and Devine-Write's article *Community Energy: What should it mean?* defines community energy in terms of community involvement in the process (i.e. the process dimension) and community benefit from the outcome (i.e. the outcome dimension) of a clean energy project.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://c4ce.net.au/nces/the-nce-strategy/introduction/#12\\_What\\_is\\_Community\\_Energy](http://c4ce.net.au/nces/the-nce-strategy/introduction/#12_What_is_Community_Energy)

<sup>2</sup> Walker, G. and Devine-Wright, P. (2008) 'Community Renewable Energy: What should it mean?' *Energy Policy*, Vol 36, p. 497-500.

