

# Submission to the Australian Energy Market Commission Report: *'Electricity pricing for a consumer-driven future'*.

I would like to make three submissions to this report:

1. **The consultation period for this report should be extended by at least 6 weeks as the process has been manifestly inadequate.**

The report was released only a couple of weeks before Christmas and submissions are due Friday 13 February. Everybody knows that during this period people (that is 'consumers') are distracted by end of school/work events, holidays and getting ready for a new school or work year.

There has been almost no publicity alerting people to the report. Although a keen reader of news I was unaware of it until report in the "Sydney Morning Herald" on 8 February 2026.

The report is hard to access, very long and has an inadequate Executive Summary that does not properly alert people to the impacts if the report was to be adopted. It is also difficult to make submissions.

2. **The recommendations in the report should not be accepted as implementing them would lead to inequitable and unfair consequences.**

If the Energy Minister did indeed instruct market regulators that all reforms must deliver cheaper bills then the recommendations in this report fall at the first hurdle. The consequence of such implementation would be higher bills for those least able to afford it such as pensioners and low-income households. It is not too far-fetched to suggest that illness or even death could result as people might have to cut down on the electricity they use for essential life support such as heating, cooling and cooking to pay for the higher fixed daily connection charge.

Further, households like my own, have spent tens of thousands of dollars electrifying their houses, installing solar panels and batteries, and purchasing electric vehicles. This has been done for the protection of the environment but also on the understanding that this would be somewhat paid for by significantly reduced energy bills. Yet, such household would see those bills rise unexpectedly by many hundreds of dollars (the SMH quotes \$400 to \$700 but we all know how these things rise once the foot is in the door). Such a change would also comprise a significant disincentive for more people to make the considerable investment needed for electrification, solar panels, batteries and electric vehicles.

### **3. Alternatives should be considered to pay for the upkeep of the energy grid.**

The most obvious alternative in the short term is to increase the variable rate for wealthy people who use the most energy. This might have the added advantage of encouraging such people away from very large homes and gas guzzling vehicles and towards electrification, solar panels, batteries and electric vehicles.

Longer term, investment should be made in putting all wires underground. This would reduce the upkeep into the future as the necessary energy infrastructure would be much less vulnerable to the external environment, elements and climate change disasters; significantly increase the visual amenity by reducing the unsightliness of 'poles and wires' and enabling trees to grow unrestricted by wire height limitations. Everyone, including those who have invested in electrification, solar panels, batteries and EVs would be far more inclined to contribute financially to such a visionary initiative which could, for example, be funded by special levies on those over a certain income and carried out to a staged and managed schedule.

Sincerely,

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