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8 February 2026

Mr Geoffrey Rutledge
Chief Executive
The Australian Energy Market Commission
Level 15, 60 Castlereagh Street
Sydney NSW, 2000

Dear Mr Rutledge

Submission: Electricity pricing for a consumer-driven future

We wish to advise of our opposition to the proposal by AEMC to change the way costs for maintaining the electricity networks are passed on as it will lead to low-income households, including old-age pensioners like us, paying more for electricity due to our relatively low use from the grid.

By way of background, over nearly twenty (20) years we have invested heavily in solar panels and a battery. Initially, in 2007 we installed [REDACTED] of solar panels as part of a new house we built in Murchison Victoria. Although only [REDACTED] this was sufficient to provide us with electricity at virtually no cost because of the high [REDACTED] feed-in tariff we received. This installation cost [REDACTED]. More recently, in 2021 we built again, this time including [REDACTED] of solar and a Tesla Powerwall 2. Coincidentally, the cost was again [REDACTED]. Despite the fact that we now receive almost nothing by way of feed-in tariff, our electricity costs are minimal.

We saw these investments as not only financially worthwhile, over the longer term, but we are also committed to reducing green-house gases so our decisions were also based on altruistic grounds.

Our reasons for opposing the proposed changes are:

1. Equity

As a matter of principle, we submit that to introduce change that will disadvantage some residential customers is inequitable. Why should those on low-incomes or on the old-age pension or other forms of government support and with relatively low electricity consumption because of their financial circumstances, pay more than those with incomes in the hundreds of thousands of dollars a year who can afford to pay?

2. Industry demands

Many industries have very high energy demands which necessitates a higher standard of infrastructure than would otherwise be necessary for the domestic market. It seems logical to us that these industries should pay more for the higher standard of infrastructure they rely on.

3. Time of use

Residential customers like us do not use the grid for many hours of each day. During daylight hours, when the sun is shining, we do use the grid but that is to feed back into it if the feed-in tariff is positive. This is not always the case, as you will be aware. On the other hand, most nights we do not use the grid at all because all our energy needs are provided by the battery. We submit that we should only have to pay for the maintenance of the grid during those hours we are using it.

4. Other infrastructure

We consider it is worth looking at other infrastructure, such as the road network. In the case of toll-roads, heavy transport pays more per use than private citizens. This makes sense because of the additional stress heavy transport places on the roads, hence leading to increased maintenance and a shorter economic life. The same principle should apply to the electricity network.

5. Our investment in infrastructure

As mentioned earlier, we have invested around [REDACTED] solar and a battery over the last twenty (20) years and during that time have fed [REDACTED] into the grid (we keep detailed records). Surely, if we are expected to contribute towards the cost of the electricity infrastructure, which we accept is reasonable, then at the same time other users should contribute to our infrastructure.

Conclusion

In concluding, we refer to the AEMC's "Tips for making a submission", which, *inter alia* states

"under the energy objectives achieving the long-term interests of consumers is the overarching objective."

We submit that in no way can the proposal to change the way costs for maintaining the electricity networks which will lead to low-income households paying significantly more for electricity, achieve the AEMC's own objective in relation to those consumers.

Yours sincerely

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