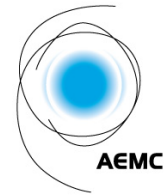


Improving the NEM access standards – Package 2 ERC0394



12 May 2026

Report on rule not made within 12 months under NEL section 108A

Purpose

The Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC or Commission) is required under s. 108A of the National Electricity Law (NEL) to publicly report on rules not made within 12 months of the publication of the notice of the commencement of the rule change process.

Background

The access standards in the National Electricity Rules (NER) define the permissible range of technical requirements that connection applicants need to meet before being allowed to connect to the National Electricity Market (NEM).

On 8 May 2025, the AEMC initiated and published a consultation paper for three rule change requests relating to the access standards:

- *Improving the NEM access standards – Package 2*, submitted by the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)
- *Definitions of protection system requirements*, submitted by Rod Hughes Consulting
- *Conditions for generator protection systems*, submitted by Rod Hughes Consulting.

AEMO's rule change request proposed several amendments to the access standards, with a focus on large inverter-based loads such as data centres and hydrogen electrolyzers. The two Rod Hughes Consulting rule change requests proposed clarifications and minor changes to the access standards for protection systems.

The Commission consolidated these rule change requests on 8 May 2025 because they raised related issues and we consider it is desirable for them to be dealt with together.

The AEMC published a draft determination and draft rule for the consolidated rule change requests on 12 March 2026. The Commission granted an extension for the draft determination under s. 107 of the NEL, as outlined below. Submissions to the draft determination closed on 7 May 2026.

Reason for the final rule determination not being made within 12 months

On 28 August 2025, the AEMC extended the time for making the draft determination and draft rule to 12 March 2026. This extension was required because complex issues were raised in the rule change requests and in stakeholder submissions to the consultation paper. AEMO's rule change request raised a number of technical matters that required further analysis, and stakeholders provided detailed technical feedback on these issues. Many stakeholder submissions put forward differing views on the proposed amendments and called for further consultation. The extension allowed for more detailed analysis and consultation on the issues raised in the rule change requests. For example, we formed a Technical Working Group to engage more closely with industry stakeholders on the system security impacts of large loads and how to manage these impacts.

Expected time for making a final rule determination

The final determination and final rule are due to be published by 18 June 2026.