

Strategic priorities for energy market development 2013

AEMC access

The AEMC should be commended for holding meetings open to concerned members of the public where considered discussion can take place with senior officers of the organization. With AEMO ceasing their regular Forum meetings the only link with the public by the industry has been the rare appearance of senior officers at specific conferences with limited ability for discussion.

With the continued changes in the industry there is a case for these meetings to be held annually for the next few years to refine the ongoing strategy.

Organization solvency

The change in demand pattern has affected many matters within the industry. Many of the fees and charges associated with various aspects of the industry have a service component combined with a demand component. Continuing with the existing ratio of these components will result in financial instability. AEMC should facilitate the revision of these charges to ensure the continued financial stability of the various organizations concerned.

Single focus

The national electricity market was set up with a single focus. While there was much discussion at the meeting I attended on social and environmental considerations it is considered critical to maintain the original single focus and manage other imperatives by alternative means.

Low voltage congestion

The advent of more than one million small photovoltaic generators within the low voltage network requires urgent action by AEMC to ensure an equitable outcome for these investors and the remaining customers, particularly with respect to local congestion. These investors, unlike the larger organizations in the industry, have a vote at elections. There is also a case for facilitating the education of this group on the implications and key factors in their investment.

Nomenclature

It is recognized that there is considerable change in the nature of many aspects of the electricity market. As a result of this AEMC should review its glossary of terms to reflect these changes. The suggestion that “customers” be replaced by “industry participants” was raised as an example of this at the meeting. In particular the previous “distribution” network needs to be replaced by a title identifying the two-way flow of power such as “exchange” network. In a similar manner the collection of many low voltage wind or other generators to bring them up to transmission voltage requires a name and “assembly” network may be appropriate.