

Submission Type: Rule Change

Reference: Access, pricing and incentive arrangements for distributed energy resources

Organisation: Private resident

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Comments: I could not find an appropriate place to send this submission, It's a consumer's POV regarding the energy changes to people with Solar power , which I must say I'm very concerned about it, I have also been trying to contact via phone your phone disconnects and never answers I live in NSW

My submission

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in regard to the proposed ideas and possible changes to solar energy subsidies in NSW.

I invested in good faith in improvement and refurbishment of my solar rooftop system to help with my power bills and reduce my carbon footprint.

I invested 7,000 dollars of my money in a large system and it was not an easy decision, it was hard to find the upfront capital , however my power bills were sometimes as much as 700 per month in winter and it was literally killing us.

My husband is due to retire in 4-5 years and I have until recently had both my adult children living at home.

The only way we felt we could get on top of things especially as we near an age where we will be on a reduced income was to make some serious decisions now about how to reduce our bills.

We chose to invest in solar and to extend and put rooftop solar on our roof to reduce our power bills and we are seeing big reductions in our bills since October.

Indeed we were encouraged to invest in solar via the subsidies offered by the NSW Government.

Unfortunately the price of a battery was prohibitive at 12,000 for 10years life span and aside from not having the capacity to afford the extra expense , we were advised the technology for powerwall still needs to be refined and it's not necessarily the best investment any how.

Our family is usually out most of the day working , volunteering or helping elderly parents, we receive a feed in tariff of .009c for unused energy during the day that feeds into the grid , (we do aim to run as many appliances before we leave in the morning) , this compares to our general rate of usage is .28 for general use and .11 for off peak hot water, although the tariff is a small amount it helps offset our usage at night-time and is often the difference between having to pay a smaller bill.

If this small incentive is limited or reduced I feel that I for one, will have wasted my money and that I will have been penalised for taking up the government incentive.

Many of the issues that have arisen by surging power supply because of solar feedins could have been solved with proper investment from the energy companies and it makes one wonder what has happened to the profit margins enjoyed by the power suppliers as prices continued to rise over the years since privatisation, what responsibility did they have to the people to ensure a system that could cope with increasing demand ? one thing is for sure as population increases there was always going to be extra strain on the grid, and in actual fact solar power has provided the energy companies with an extra power source rather than creating/building more coal fired power stations, which would have been far more expensive. The regulator needs to make the suppliers understand that in fact they have to be adaptable and intergrate a large consumer based, clean source of energy without penalising them and that it's their part of their duty to provide this as this is why they were given permission to operate.

"Many people, particularly low-and-middle-income earners, have invested in solar energy to save themselves from the very high electricity costs in this country.

"To then penalise them for trying to solve their own problems is hardly equitable."  
People could be slugged a fee if they export when the grid was busy,

Big coal and gas generators aren't charged for exporting their power to the grid, so why should we be hitting Australian households with solar.?

This is an important point, I think if we are really talking equity here there needs to be a good hard look at the why the coal fired power stations who can regulate their power more readily by operating their power sources in the evenings can't do so, and allowing more solar into the grid during the day when the sun shines.?

Is the adaptability more to do with coal fired power stations not wanting to change and be adaptable?

It is inequitable to charge solar owners when generators in the transmission network are not charged for accessing the network.