

22 May 2017

IPART Solar Feed In Tariff Review  
Level 15, 2-24 Rawson Place  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear IPART,  
The Blue Mountains Renewable Energy Co-Operative (BMRenew) is pleased to see IPART's recommendation for an increased solar FIT.

BMRenew is a non-profit registered co-operative operating in the Blue Mountains West of Sydney. We are a community group committed to growing renewable energy in our area and promoting local ownership of energy production. We believe local communities can harness low impact, renewable energy sources to meet local needs, delivering better energy solutions in our neighbourhoods.

As strong proponents of the benefits of distributed renewable energy, BMRenew welcomes this recommended increase, but considers it still falls short of recognising the value solar power is delivering in NSW.

Specifically, BMRenew believes that providing a recommended range is inadequate, and should be complemented with a mandated floor price that retailers may exceed. The current recommendation range allows retailers to benefit should solar-producing consumers be less than diligent in reviewing their power arrangements, while a floor price would provide a limit on this.

Secondly, BMRenew note that IPART terms of reference place limitations on considering externalities of power production such as associated pollution. We urge IPART to recommend a change to those terms of reference, to at least allow for recognition of externalities and potentially quantify these unrecognised costs.

Thirdly, BMRenew believes further efforts should be made to recognise the network benefits realised by local generation, in addition to reduced transmission due to reduced peak capacity demands. As the network is engineered based on such peaks, the demand reduction delivered by solar generation could be significant in terms of network infrastructure spending that has been avoided. With the growing deployment of battery storage, this impact is set to be magnified in coming years.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this review.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Skeggs  
Chair  
Blue Mountains Renewable Energy Co-Operative