

Since the end of the Solar Bonus Scheme in NSW more than 42,000 new solar PV systems have been installed under net metering and connections are continuing at a steady pace. These NSW customers have been providing an ever growing amount of electricity to the grid thus reducing the amount of electricity needing to be purchased from the generators and thus driving down the wholesale electricity price.

These customers, though contributing greatly to NSW electricity needs, are not receiving much benefit and some even fail to receive the IPART recommended 7.7c per KWh for their excess electricity.

Currently, on review of the My Energy Offers page on the IPART website the following feed-in tariff's are noted:

Lumo	7.7c per KWh
Dodo	No feed-in tariff
AGL	No feed-in tariff offered
Origin	6c per KWh
Red	No feed-in tariff offered
Energy Australia	6c per KWh
QEnergy	No feed-in tariff
Momentum	No feed-in tariff
Power Direct	6c per KWh
Australian Power & Gas	No feed-in tariff

Noting the above, which clearly indicates only one electricity retailer offering the recommended minimum feed-in tariff of 7.7c per KWh, is it not time that a mandatory regulated feed-in tariff be put in place for NSW electricity customers?

IPART, at their last review of feed-in tariff's, recommended a 'voluntary' rate range of 7.7c per KWh up to 12.9c per KWh for the current financial year. However only one retailer in NSW has abided by that recommendation and offered the minimum rate of 7.7c per KWh.

To provide fairness and ensure a stable energy market within NSW IPART should recommend a mandatory minimum feed-in tariff payable to customers in NSW who have net metered solar PV systems and should tie the minimum rate to any future retail price increases thus ensuring a stable feed-in tariff with NSW. This should assist in driving the electricity market to compete to offer customers higher feed-in tariff's, above the minimum, to secure greater access to non-generator produced electricity and thus reduce the amount of electricity they source from the generation system in Australia.

This should also ultimately aid in driving investment in new technology to enable storage of electricity sourced from solar and other green sources and could significantly reduce NSW reliance upon electricity sourced from current generation plants.

If IPART is inclined to recommend a mandatory feed-in tariff for solar, then they should consider a rate 10c below the regulated retail price, i.e. if rates are currently 24.25c per KWh then set the feed-in tariff at 15c per KWh. This rate should stay in line with any regulated price increases.

A fair mandatory feed-in tariff will provide certainty to NSW electricity customers and ensure a stable market moving forward.