

IPART public submission regarding Feed in Tariff.

From: Geoff Tosio, Sales Manager

Bellingen Solar Depot – PV grid connect, solar hot water and stand alone system retailer.

To whom it may concern,

Thanks for allowing public submissions on this topic, it is greatly appreciated.

I have worked for 3 different Solar companies over the past 4 years and spanning across 2 states (WA and now NSW), and in my time I have struggled with the 'Solar Coaster'. What I mean to imply is the boom and bust nature of the industry which is a result of government assistance that is too high or non existent. Please understand what this does to the staffing of solar businesses across our state, they are extremely busy and hiring many staff for a short period and alongside that many unscrupulous operators enter the market to make a 'quick buck', this in turn damages our collective reputation. On the flip side the bulk of subsidies are ripped away and 90% of the staff are retrenched and the others are left to struggle earning a living until the next phase.

As a consumer of energy (and a thankful one at that – the grid is an amazing service) I understand peoples awe at the rising costs of energy, and I'm appalled at the politics played in deflecting the blame between the different sectors of supply and retail (or the Solar industry)

I believe every consumer deserves the right to connect Solar at their house, and for using the grid as a battery they should contribute to the maintenance and supply of services to those around them. When I see access fee's for grid supply rising I can justify the reasons for doing so, but when the customer sells their energy and that enters their local grid only to be absorbed by their neighbours at a rate over 5 times that they are selling it for then I can understand their frustration.

I believe a fair feed in tariff is about 70-80% of the going rate of electricity, and it should rise in line with the price increases accordingly.

I understand that the energy manufacturers shouldn't bear this cost, they are doing good work at a competitive rate, but I also think they should not be spending as much as they are in 'upgrading the network', technology is changing the future of generation and some existing infrastructure would be sufficient for the foreseeable future. The retailers however add very little value to the process and in the meantime almost double the wholesale rate, so they should bear most of this cost.

The federal government has justified carbon tax on the grounds that they wish to reduce carbon pollution, and yet they can't contribute a few percent of that revenue to a sector that will dramatically impact the very outcome they want – this is scandalous. The state governments should lobby the federal government to subsidise the Feed In Tariff as a national scheme.

Thanks for hearing my thoughts, I look forward to a positive future for renewables as we steadily mature as a society weighing up the energy options and developing a grid network that can handle both supply and generation into the distant carbon efficient future.

Best Regards,

Geoff Tosio

0409 894643