



SolarCitizens

SUBMISSION TO THE INDEPENDENT PRICING AND REGULATORY TRIBUNAL

SOLAR FEED-IN TARIFFS

WHAT IS SOLAR CITIZENS

Solar Citizens is a non-profit, non-partisan community organisation representing rooftop solar owners around Australia. We have grown to over 45,000 members but serve to represent the over 2 million solar owners in Australia. We work to protect the rights of solar owners and help see Australia put a solar panel on every rooftop.

RESPONSE TO ISSUES PAPER

Solar Citizens stands by the following principles, believing them to be fair and reasonable:

- A fair go for solar
- A fair return for your investment in solar - ie. a fair price paid for solar electricity
- A panel on every roof
- A great understanding of solar
- A new approach to energy
- A renewable energy future

From the outset, the terms of reference of this review specifically prevent IPART from considering whether to establish mandatory feed-in tariffs for PV customers outside the Solar Bonus Scheme.

Currently, New South Wales has the lowest average feed-in tariffs in the country for people installing solar. The majority of solar owners are not being paid a fair price for the electricity they export to the grid. These solar owners have invested a substantial amount of their own money in these solar systems and they are providing energy back to the grid, but are not being fairly compensated.

Solar Citizens requests that IPART consider whether the approach of allowing gentailers to set feed-in tariffs is conducive to an efficient and competitive electricity market. When vertically-integrated electricity generator / retailers ('gentailers') have the power to set tariffs they have the power to exclude their competition. This is not conducive to a competitive electricity market.

Solar Citizens recognises that IPART is not interested in introducing a 1:1 feed-in tariff. All we seek is the right for solar owners to compete at a fair price. Competing at a fair price means that retailers should pay a benefit-reflective feed-in tariff, as currently the benefits of distributed solar are being ignored.

Solar systems with energy storage can compete to supply electricity reliably at critical peak periods. The right regulatory framework will reduce peak demand, encourage efficient investment and reduce the cost of system augmentation - all of which will deliver lower electricity costs.

To ensure that this review contributes to a more competitive electricity market in NSW IPART should:

- Recognise the benefits of distributed generation and storage and that aligning

incentives with costs and benefits will encourage efficient investment and reduce electricity costs for everyone.

- Consider what steps (other than regulation, which is precluded by the terms of reference) would encourage gentailers in NSW to offer benefit-reflective feed-in tariffs.

Solar Citizens also supports the more detailed submission provided by the Clean Energy Council.

CONTACT DETAILS

For further discussion or clarification, please contact Nick Taylor at nick@solarcitizens.org.au or 0411442881.