



## Media Release

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### Consumers leading the clean energy transition, but further reform needed: ECA responds to release of 2026 ISP

Energy Consumers Australia (ECA) says today's release of the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) 2026 Integrated System Plan (ISP) reveals that rooftop solar and home batteries will continue to be a major driver of the nation's energy transition. However, ECA calls for network regulation reform to optimise every dollar spent on the transition.

"We welcome the release of the ISP which reinforces that Australia's energy transition is being powered by millions of homes and small businesses through an impressive uptake of battery and solar," Energy Consumers Australia GM, Advocacy and Policy, Brian Spak said.

"As the report notes, the investments consumers are making in these resources - supported by more dynamic distribution networks - benefit everyone in the National Electricity Market. They reduce the need for massive grid-scale investments, ultimately lowering costs for all consumers. Schemes such as the Federal Government's Cheaper Home Batteries program have been highly successful in fast-tracking this growth. The ISP has found that about 600,000 households have installed batteries, and over a third of 'suitable' homes of the NEM have rooftop solar.

"AEMO's finding that coordinating household energy resources could save \$5 billion by 2050 highlights a massive opportunity—but only if we build greater consumer trust. To overcome understandable scepticism and boost low uptake, policymakers must better communicate the tangible benefits that initiatives like virtual power plants offer to consumers and the wider community."

ECA is calling for a reform to make the energy markets work more efficiently and effectively for consumers.

"Consumers shouldn't pay a cent more for their energy than they need to," Mr Spak said. "At a time when cost-of-living pressures are impacting households and small businesses, a truly efficient energy market must focus on asset utilisation – making use of existing infrastructure to do more work.

"Australia will continue to need large-scale investment in our energy system. But supply-side infrastructure is only one side of the equation. Future iterations of the ISP must evolve past treating consumer choices as mere assumptions. Instead, demand-side resources must compete on an equal footing with large-scale generation in energy system modelling."

To address this gap, ECA has partnered with the CSIRO to fund and support the development of the [FlexCost framework](#). The first report and full results will be released later in the year. It will demonstrate how household batteries, electric vehicles, and energy-efficient appliances can be integrated to build a lower-cost electricity system. ECA is urging future ISPs to embed these demand-side resources directly into their core modelling.

"FlexCost is a game-changing framework which will help ensure consumers do not pay more than what is needed to provide them with the energy services they want," Mr Spak said. "It will provide policymakers with a practical framework for best-practice system planning, policy, and program design, ensuring resources like home batteries are used as efficiently and flexibly as possible."

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#### About Energy Consumers Australia

[Energy Consumers Australia](#) is the independent, national voice for residential and small business energy consumers. We enable residential and small business energy consumers to have their voices heard.