

MY SUBMISSION RE THE INQUIRY INTO ENERGY PRICES IN TASMANIA

Considering that here in Tasmania we are virtually 100% sufficient in power supply I fail to see why electricity prices have increased markedly overtime.

We should never have installed the Bass Link Cable. It resulted in the Liberal government of the time allowing Hydro to sell masses of electricity to the mainland which caused the severe depletion of the water in our hydro lakes. This resulted in us having to install generators at Bell Bay to boost power supply. (Prior to this the government of the time were going to decommission the Bell Bay Power station. Imagine what a disaster that would have been.)

Then the cable broke down for many months and the company was placed in receivership. I would therefore warn against installing the proposed Marinus Link as history could repeat itself.

Instead of wasting money on a second cable (whose cost would be prohibitive,) installation of a solar/thermal power plant like the one proposed for Port Augusta would be a much more viable use of funds and would provide base load power.

I believe that there are also several proposed wind farms in the pipeline which would boost power supply.

National Energy Market

Here is part of an article from February 2018 which suggests that the Will Hodgman government were going to withdraw from the NEM. So why didn't they?

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/tasmania-wants-to-quit-broken-nem-as-major-parties-agree-it-needs-reform-74659>

Tasmania, which only joined the east coast states and South Australia on the NEM in 2006, is closely linked to Victoria's mainly coal-powered market, both by undersea cable and by that state's pricing structure.

But Tassie's Liberal Premier, Will Hodgman, has promised to cut those pricing ties if his government is re-elected, to ensure the mostly hydro-powered state is not exposed to future market fluctuations caused by power stations closures or system failures on the mainland.

"With Tasmania charging toward 100 per cent energy self-sufficiency ... now is the time to take back our competitive advantage and break away from inflated mainland prices, and to drive down the cost of living of Tasmanians," [Hodgman said this week](#).

The announcement casts further shade on the state of the NEM, which has been clouded by concerns over regulatory and physical market failures that have led to "obscene" wholesale price spikes and ever increasing consumer bills. The Tasmanian government has revealed plans for the island state to opt out of the National Electricity Market, cutting all ties with mainland pricing mechanisms even though it will still export and import power over its sub-sea cable.

I think therefore that it is imperative that this withdrawal should occur.

I also think that that any new large companies wishing to invest here should be obliged to produce their own electricity. Why should they have cheap power when householders must pay a much higher amount?

Originally householders who installed rooftop solar panels were paid 28.23 cents per unit fed into the grid. It has now dropped, according to my latest bill dated June 2023, to only .088830 cents per unit. Retention of a higher rate would be a good incentive for consumers to install more panels and help the contribution to our Tasmanian grid and the government should encourage more Tasmanians to have batteries connected to their existing solar panels.

Zinc-bromine batteries which are cheaper to produce than the current lithium variety and are used to store solar power would make it financially viable for Tasmanians to go "off grid" thus reducing the amount of power needed to be produced by Hydro Tasmania. In fact, there is current research by Dr David Mitlin of Clarkson Uni in New York into industrial hemp as a replacement for graphene in super capacitors at a quarter of the cost which will make them even more affordable in the future. See; <http://www.dopemagazine.com/tech-thursday-hemp-graphene> . We already have an up-and-coming industrial hemp industry here, imagine how many jobs could be created if this project could be realised.

More wave and tide projects should be encouraged.

A company called Wave Swell Energy conducted a successful trial off King Island but received no interest or investment from any Australian state which seems a pity. See part of the article below <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-03-29/world-leading-wave-swell-energy-trial-wraps-up/102159078>

Wave Swell Energy chief executive Paul Geason said he was "delighted" with the results of the multi-million-dollar pilot project off the coast of King Island, and believed the technology would become an important part of future global electricity production.

However, Mr Geason said a lack of incentive from both state and national governments has meant the country will miss out on becoming home to the "world-leading" technology, adding the company would shop its designs on the international market.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on energy prices in Tasmania.

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