

SUSTAINABILITY OF ENERGY SUPPLY AND RESOURCES IN NSW

Organisation: Randwick City Council

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Randwick City Council submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Sustainability of Energy Supply and Resources in NSW

Randwick City Council would like to thank the Committee on Environment and Planning for the opportunity to provide submissions into the Sustainability of Energy Supply and Resources in NSW.

Randwick City Council has a well-established track record in procuring renewable energy for its own operations, as well as promoting renewable energy and emissions reduction throughout its community. The Council is also shows strong concern regarding the impact of coal mining and emissions from coal fired power stations on the climate, the environment, human health and water security.

Recent examples of the Council's support for renewable energy and decarbonising the energy industry include:

- The support for a State-wide goal of net zero emissions by 2030 (as per the RCC motion to the 2017 LG conference motion, and subsequent conference resolution);
- Randwick's early commitment to declaring a Climate Emergency;
- The preparation and implementation of an all-inclusive roadmap to procure 100% of Council's stationary and transport energy from renewable sources by 2030 in keeping with a March 2018 Council resolution;
- Achieving 100% divestment from fossil fuels;
- Achieving 100% carbon neutral certification for Council's operations under the Federal Government's National Carbon Offset Standard;
- Signing a renewable energy power purchase agreement to procure renewable energy for Council sites from the Moree Solar Farm in NSW in conjunction with other local Councils in our regional cluster;
- Providing Council-wide support and participation in a broader local government program which enables residents and businesses to install their own solar or battery storage systems and consider energy reducing and demand management solutions in the home and workplace;
- Implementing a very successful pilot program with UNSW enabling energy-efficient pump and filter changeovers for residential swimming pools that is now rolling-out across other local Council areas;
- Real-time monitoring and accounting for renewable energy generation across 13 Council sites, also enabling self-diagnostic notifications and immediate follow-up to keep solar systems performing at their optimal level;
- Working with neighbouring Councils to facilitate solar installations on the rooftops of almost 94% of all eastern suburban schools (estimated to be equivalent to a 12MW power station by 2020)

Previous Council initiatives have included:

- Development of a Low Carbon Future strategic framework with our neighbouring Councils to identify a clear and specific pathway to shifting to low carbon solutions within a set timeframe, accountable across the eastern region and incorporating reliable and accurate third-party monitoring and reporting;
- Separate rebate programs provided to incentivise residents to install a wide range of energy saving and demand management energy-saving measures around their home and workplace;
- Development and implementation of the first local government emissions trading scheme aimed at increasing participant's understanding and application of carbon pricing to support carbon reduction activities across the local government sector in NSW.

The Council's ongoing focus is on energy conservation, demand management across its operations and renewable energy – the latter particularly around rooftop solar installations and off-site renewable energy via power purchase agreements (PPAs). This has allowed Randwick Council to reduce its energy bills; secure fixed low-cost energy prices; and reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. The Randwick community has also realised the significant financial and environmental benefits of renewable energy, with almost 3,000 rooftop solar systems (12 megawatts) installed across the Local Government Area (LGA), most of these over the past decade or so.

However, for much of the Randwick LGA, the ability to influence the sustainability of the energy supply is very limited due to factors such as living in a high or medium-density dwelling or rental properties; or having too small an energy load to negotiate a PPA. In reality, approximately 44% of the Randwick population are renting, and 73.5% of the dwellings are medium or high density, which results in an enormous proportion of the community currently locked out, but quite interested in or inclined to, access potentially beneficial financial or environment opportunities to participate in renewable energy solutions.

Randwick City Council encourages the Parliament of NSW to address such barriers – as well as those limiting the rate of integration of large-scale renewable into the grid - to ensure that the State does not miss out on, both leading on or realising its full potential for delivering national and global leadership in sustainable energy solutions. This leadership would attract international and national recognition, investment and is likely to both service and attract the next technology solutions around battery storage, electric vehicle take-up and the integration of these technologies into the short term future. Of course, all of these solutions and approaches would also require a sensitive and ethical transition for communities currently working in or part-reliant on fossil-fuel industries.

To access the full economic and environmental opportunities of renewable energy in both cities and regional communities, the enquiry into the Sustainability of Energy Supply and Resources in NSW could consider :

At the National / State level:

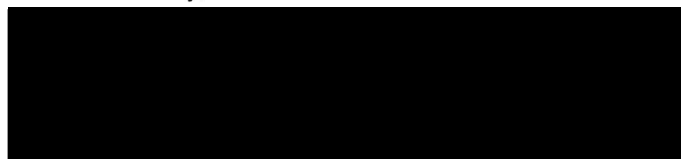
- **Opportunities for NSW** in localised and regional development and roll-out of pilot programs **to emulate other jurisdictions in battery storage integration with renewables and the grid.** This could greatly enhance economic opportunities in regional NSW;
- **Shoring up potential power deficiencies by investigating opportunities with other States and Territories** to develop and integrate renewable energy investment 'out-of-State' capable of avoiding or reducing 'brown-outs' at peak energy times;
- With the abundance of solar energy in Australia, **NSW could take a leading role in developing the so-called 'super grid' of renewable energy across the country** with a view to reaching 'positive' energy production and its potential application in developing hydrogen for export to Australia's northern neighbours

At the regional level in NSW:

- **Addressing the barriers faced by apartment dwellers and renters looking to access sustainable energy.** This could be implemented by:
 - reviewing BASIX to ensure rooftop solar systems and electric vehicle charging stations are installed in all new suitable developments;
 - providing assistance and incentives to apartments looking to install rooftop solar;
 - piloting and promoting programs such as SunTenants which assist renters install solar;
- **Ensuring that capacity of transmission and distribution networks does not limit or delay the uptake of renewable energy into the NSW grid; Removing the Luxury Car Tax applied to electric vehicles** to encourage their uptake across NSW;

- **Providing strong support for economic and other initiatives to assist regional communities and workers that may be affected by changing energy and resource markets;**
- **Removing the word 'aspirational' from *NSW's aspirational objectives of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050* and preparing a clear and detailed roadmap to achieving this target. This could also assist in providing certainty in the energy market to encourage investment in sustainable energy.**
- **Increasing the collaboration and communication between local and state governments to align targets and work together on agreed-upon pathways;**
- **Setting a clear target for renewable energy generation in NSW above the Renewable Energy Target (RET) from 2020 onwards;**
- **Requiring all Federal, State and Local government buildings and services procure 100% of their electricity from renewable energy by 2025.**
- **Requiring all Federal, State and Local government vehicle fleets be electric or hybrid by 2025.**
- **Continuing the testing and roll out of demand response technologies and systems throughout NSW, with a particular focus on easing demand in the network in summer when aging coal power plants are more likely to fail.**

Yours sincerely,



Peter Maganov

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(contact )

On behalf of Randwick Council and Councillors

15 September 2019