

**Submission
No 32**

**THE ELECTRICITY OUTAGES AFFECTING FAR WEST NSW IN OCTOBER
2024**

Name: Mr Zane Smith

Date Received: 10 February 2025

February 10, 2025

Attention: Committee Members on Environment & Planning, NSW

Re: Inquiry into Far West, NSW electricity outages 2024

I wish to advise that as a result of the electricity outages in October 2024 which were classified as a Natural Disaster due to storm damage my household like thousands of residents across the region was not only without power, lost hundreds of dollars worth of food but I have recently discovered since receiving our quarterly AGL invoice that our solar system has been impaired and no longer working. properly noted with a significant drop in solar kwh and during a quarter which should have produced higher feed in with longer days.

I immediately contacted our provider AGL and was told to contact Transgrid given that they were responsible for electricity supply to region and whilst storm caused tower destruction (natural disaster) the continued outages, fluctuations in supply etc were the result of insufficient back up generators and indeed a reported decommissioned generator that could not be used. I followed up with Transgrid and after several attempts was informed that the appropriate person would be in contact. I received email that I would be contacted in coming days. Thirteen days later I followed up again via email after no response and was informed 4 days later that the power outages would not have affected the solar system and to follow up with Essential Energy as they service the Far West network or a local solar technician in case the system is faulty or damaged! All this despite our solar system working significantly more effectively prior to the outage.

I have since spoken with an independent trade qualified electricity contractor who in his professional opinion has advised that the system would shut down with the outages but with frequent power fluctuations and reported ineffective back up generators it is most certainly likely that the impairment to the solar system was caused by this given that it was working significantly better prior to the electricity blackouts and therefore an event directly linked to Transgrid resources and not Essential Energy who service the supply for Transgrid.

I am now left with a solar system that no longer working to the same capacity it did prior to the Far West electricity outages and nobody wants to take responsibility, yet the provider has been willing to take ownership of the electricity outages to the point that they apologised for the "disruption"

and have provided community grants as a way of apologising, but they are not willing to even send a technician to investigate our solar system, let alone discuss compensation of any kind and instead passed the query off as being "somebody else's issue".

In summary it would appear that the significant and extended power outages to the Far West whilst at onset were triggered by natural disaster but the ongoing outages could have been prevented by a back up system in working order that has not only left my family and others in the dark for days on end without air conditioning in warm temperatures, loss of hundreds of dollars of food and not just on one occasion and a damaged solar system, the repercussion of which will bare significant financial cost, nit to mention the cost on the environment in the absence of an infectively functioning system. Who is accountable and furthermore responsible for compensation for this?

I would welcome some further advice and assistance in terms of my grievance regarding the power outages and would be more than happy to provide further information and documentation. I can be contacted via mobile telephone on mobile [REDACTED].

Your's sincerely,

Mr Zane Smith

[REDACTED]

Broken Hill NSW 2880

MB: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]