

AEMO's Integrated System Plan (ISP), which was recommended as part of the Finkel Review, is expected to be released in mid-July. It is likely to give consideration to and make recommendations in relation to supporting transmission infrastructure required to bring Snowy 2.0 on-line. The ISP, as well as Snowy Hydro's plans and views on Snowy 2.0, will be considered by the NSW Government in developing the Transmission Strategy outlined by the Minister in his speech to the Energy Networks Association on 6 June.

#### QUESTION ON NOTICE

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Mr O'Reilly, you said there are 15,000 megawatts of various proposals in the system. Are they currently seeking approval?

**Mr O'REILLY:** Yes, of the order of that in terms of the planning system. There is a range of steps that you can take. Obviously there is a large amount of interest.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I am just trying to understand. In terms of the submission made by the Minister in October last year, it was said there were 6,600 megawatts seeking approval through the planning system. It is not a trick question. I am happy for you to take it on notice and just give us updated figures for each of those.

**Mr O'REILLY:** Yes. We will take that on notice and give you updated figures. In this space, because of the nature of the incentives that are available, like the renewable energy scheme, there is a reason why there is a large amount of flow in generation proposals coming forward.

#### ANSWER

As at June 2018, there is 15,411 megawatts of proposed energy generation capacity progressing through the planning system or with planning approval. This is made up of 14,061 megawatts of renewable energy projects, 1,250 megawatts of gas-fired generation projects and 100 megawatts of coal-fired generation projects.

Of the 14,061 megawatts of renewable energy projects, 8,448 megawatts are seeking planning approval and 5,613 have already been approved.

#### QUESTION ON NOTICE

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** Around 380,000 households in New South Wales have rooftop solar. Can you update the Committee as to how many of those solar households have smart meters? For example, a lot of the retail energy companies at the end of the Solar Bonus Scheme said that they could not properly account for or give solar households a full credit for their solar feed-in without them having smart meters. The last time I was briefed, towards the end of last year, I think there were only about 40,000 households that had smart meters. Can you update us as to how many have smart meters?

**Ms HOLE:** Just to clarify, are you looking for the number of customers with smart meters who were part of the Solar Bonus Scheme or the total number of customers with solar?

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** No, just the total. There are 380,000 solar homes in New South Wales. How many of them have smart meters?

**Ms HOLE:** I have to confirm. I will have to get back to you on that number.

#### ANSWER

There are around 170,000 with digital meters.

#### QUESTION ON NOTICE

## QUESTION ON NOTICE

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** How much capacity for new electricity generation is currently under construction in New South Wales?

**Mr O'REILLY:** I would have to take the actual amounts on notice. There is a range of proposals both in the planning system that are at various stages of planning and approval. There are a range of proposals that have submitted connection enquiries. It is sometimes particularly difficult for the Government to judge at what stage particular proposals are at. Some major gentailers—generator retailers such as EnergyAustralia have flagged potential gas-fired development here. As you know, AGL has announced an increase in the capacity of Bayswater. We keep abreast of market developments, but sometimes because you have of the order of up to 15,000 megawatts of proposed new generation, largely of a renewable nature, in the planning system, it is difficult for the Government to pre-judge how much of that will come online.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** The Government's submission says there is approximately 1,000 megawatts of clean energy under construction as of October of last year, could you please update that.

## ANSWER

As at June 2018, nine renewable energy projects totalling 1,041 megawatts of generation capacity were under construction in NSW. This is made up of four solar farms totalling around 246 megawatts, four wind farms totalling around 682 megawatts and one hybrid solar/wind/hydro project totalling around 113 megawatts.

There are no non-renewable projects under construction.

## QUESTION ON NOTICE

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I understand. But one possible consequence, for example, might be that the board decides not to go with Snowy 2.0 because they have no guarantee that the transmission system will be upgraded, so it would not be economically worthwhile. They may of course be dependent on the upgrade of any transmission networks in order to make that decision. I am happy for you to take this on notice, but we would really like to know when those decisions around the transmission upgrade arrangements may likely be made. Are you happy to take that on notice?

**Mr O'REILLY:** Yes.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Could you also give us some guidance about what are the factors that may cause that to be delayed beyond that relevant date at the end of the year? If you are able to provide some guidance on that on notice, are you happy to do so?

**Mr O'REILLY:** We would do our best to answer in relation to the questions that you ask, but at the end of the day the transmission strategy will be developed in a way that is based around the long-term interests of New South Wales. It has to be considered in that light rather than being any particular timetable.

## ANSWER

The Board of Snowy Hydro has outlined the process for progressing the Snowy 2.0 project following release of the Feasibility Study. The Board is undertaking further work and Project refinements so a final investment decision can be made. This final investment decision is expected to be made in late 2018, subject to the approval of Snowy Hydro shareholders.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You have talked about the 900,000 households that are eligible for the rebate schemes, can you give us a breakdown between how many are accessing the low income household rebate and how many are accessing the family energy rebate?

**Mr O'REILLY:** To ensure I give you an accurate answer I will take that on notice and come back to you.

**The CHAIR:** Could you compare that over the last three years?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That is how many people have taken up the rebates. Could you also take on notice how many people are eligible to take up those rebates?

## **ANSWER**

The 900,000 households represent recipients across all rebates.

The Department of Planning and Environment estimates around 800,000 Low Income Household Rebates were paid to households in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

In December 2017, the NSW Government amended the NSW Social Programs for Energy Code so the Department could improve data collection on the number of rebate customers. The Department estimates that around 834,000 households received the Low Income Household Rebate between 1 July 2017 to 31 December 2017. This data set cannot be compared to the estimates from the previous financial years due to changes in methodology.

The Department also provides the Low Income Household Rebate to customers with an account with an energy retailer, referred to as "on-supplied" customers. As at 9 July 2018, almost 8,400 Low Income Household Rebates have been approved for on-supplied customers in 2017-18. This compares to around 8,100 on-supplied customers in 2016/17 and around 7,700 on-supplied customers in 2015/16. Note that applications for the 2017/18 financial year are still being processed.

Almost 42,000 Family Energy Rebates have been approved in 2017-18 with around 2,800 applications still being processed. This compares to 44,000 households receiving Family Energy Rebates in 2016-17 and 62,000 households in 2015-16.