

QUESTION ON NOTICE

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am happy for you to take this on notice. Can you give us a breakdown of how much already has been approved and break it down by renewables and others?

Ms HOLE: Yes.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: And could you break it down by how much is still seeking approval, again broken down between renewable and others.

Ms HOLE: I will take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Yes, of course. I think it was the case at budget estimates that 1,225 megawatts only were currently under construction here in New South Wales. Does that still more or less remain current? Again, I am happy for you to take that question on notice.

Ms HOLE: I will take that on notice.

ANSWER

As at October 2018 there were 18,700 megawatts (MW) of energy projects in the pipeline in NSW. This includes:

- Over 1,500 MW under construction, including almost 600 MW of solar projects, over 800 MW of wind projects and a hybrid wind and solar project of around 100 MW.
- Over 6,700 MW with planning approval, including over 2,100 MW of solar projects, over 3,100 MW of wind projects, a co-generation project of around 200 MW, and 1,250 of gas generation projects.
- Over 10,500 MW of projects seeking planning approval, including over 8,600 MW of solar projects, almost 1,600 MW of wind projects, around 150 MW of bioenergy, and a 100 MW coal power station upgrade.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Can you give us any information on the second aspect of that where retailers have been required to use all reasonable endeavours to inform and assist customers receiving a rebate to identify the most appropriate market offer?

Ms HOLE: Yes. That is with the Department of Planning and Environment because that was implemented through the code for social programs and we are working with the retailers at the moment to look at the impacts of that particular measure.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Retailers were required to report. Has that reporting already taken place since the program commenced from January 2018?

Ms HOLE: There is work in progress on that matter at the moment.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: What does that mean?

Ms HOLE: There is further work. If you want further details about where that is up to, I will have to take it on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Do you know whether retailers have been required to report?

Ms HOLE: Retailers are required to report regularly on the rebates program, including all those measures in the code for social programs.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: On that, they are required. By what mechanism are they required and where is the reporting and where can we see the contents of the reports?

Ms HOLE: The mechanism is through the code for social programs, which is a regulatory obligation.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Is it legally binding on them?

Ms HOLE: It is legally binding on them.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Where is that information available?

Ms HOLE: I would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: If you could let us know on notice what reporting has occurred,

where that information is available and what the results of that reporting are in terms of the number of customers who changed offers, for example.

Ms HOLE: Yes.

ANSWER

The Department has received two rounds of reporting information from 21 energy retailers for two six month periods which make up the 2017-18 financial year. The reporting information contains material of commercial interest to retailers and the data is being aggregated for public release.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am happy for you to take this on notice, but can you tell us what is the total figure of New South Wales government investment in new energy generation?

Ms HOLE: I would like to take that on notice.

ANSWER

The Government supports a private sector led market in generation. To support the transition to new technologies the Government has provided funding support to new generation projects including:

- \$65 million in funding towards development with ARENA of the state's first solar farms at Nyngan and Broken Hill. These solar farms have added 155 MW to the state's generation fleet;
- signed a direct renewable energy purchasing agreement with the 24 MW Dubbo Solar Farm; and
- purchasing renewable energy from the Beryl Solar Farm to offset the greenhouse gas emissions from the operational needs of the Sydney Metro Northwest project. The 87 MW Beryl Solar Farm is in regional NSW.

The Government is also providing access to state owned assets for the development of new energy and storage proposals. An expression of interest process seeking proposals from the private sector for new energy and storage projects on the state's water infrastructure assets, including 38 of WaterNSW's dams is currently underway.

To attract investment in new energy generation and network infrastructure the Government is developing the Transmission Infrastructure Strategy. This work could stimulate investment in over 5,500 megawatts of new generation across the state.

This year the Government has also announced three new programs, drawing on funding from the Climate Change Fund, that aim to increase energy generation in NSW:

- The \$55 million Emerging Energy Program will provide grants to support feasibility and commercialisation of large-scale energy projects.
- The \$30 million Regional Community Energy program to enable communities across the State to build their own local clean energy projects.
- The \$15 million Solar for Low Income Households trial program will provide funding to purchase up to 3,400 rooftop solar power systems for low income households.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

The Hon. LOU AMATO: Thank you both for coming in today. You will have to excuse me, I am just filling in for another member. Can I ask a question in regard to renewable energy? In regard to solar and wind, what percentage on average per day do they generate? If you do not know the answer you are welcome to take it on notice.

Ms HOLE: I will take that question on notice.

ANSWER

On average, solar and wind contributed 3.8% and 3.6% respectively to daily electricity generation in NSW during 2017-18 (average of 183 gigawatt-hours per day). This solar figure includes generation from both rooftop solar and utility scale solar.

Notes:

Data sourced from Australian Energy Market Operator using NEM-Review database.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: How is the transmission strategy being developed and what is the process for the sign-off inside government? Can you describe that?

Ms HOLE: Obviously it is being developed in consultation with TransGrid because it is the transmission operator. In terms of the sign-off process, as I said, it is a government strategy and it is a matter for the Government.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am asking about the process not the strategy. What is TransGrid's role in that process?

Ms HOLE: As with any stakeholder, it works on the Integrated System Plan. It is also the transmission planner for the State. We draw on expertise.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am trying to understand how those two things interact. You are saying it is a government strategy, but that TransGrid is the transmission planner for the State. How do those two things interact?

Ms HOLE: TransGrid is the transmission planner for the State. It publishes its reports, so they are available to everyone with the detailed technical information.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: When the Government sets its transmission strategy, it will look at those reports. What is the sign-off process for the Government's transmission strategy?

Ms HOLE: I do not have further information on that.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am simply asking about the process. I do not think it is particularly complicated.

Ms HOLE: I appreciate that and I am happy to get back to you. I am not leading the work on the transmission strategy.

The CHAIR: Are you saying you do not know, or are you saying you do but it is someone else's portfolio?

Ms HOLE: No, it is the Minister's portfolio. Mr O'Reilly has appeared previously, but unfortunately he is away this week and could not attend today. He is better able to talk on that.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am happy for you to take the question on notice. I am simply trying to understand the process and I will explain why. As you describe those transmission decisions, they have a very big impact, particularly across the south-west of the State. They have a huge impact on regional communities. I am interested in the government process for sign-off as those decisions are made.

Ms HOLE: I fully appreciate that. Any transmission project that is built must go through planning approvals and all the relevant obligations, information disclosure and oversight that comes with that process.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would appreciate some information about exactly what is the usual government process.

ANSWER

The Transmission Infrastructure Strategy (Strategy) has been under development by the Department of Planning and Environment since May 2018, with regular consultation with key NSW government agencies. Targeted consultation has also occurred with key stakeholders, including the state transmission planner, TransGrid, national market bodies, proponents of transmission and generation projects, industry bodies, and consumer representative bodies.

The Finkel Review into the Future Security of the National Electricity Market recommended that the Australian Energy Market Operator develop an Integrated System Plan (ISP) to facilitate the network investment to meet the needs of the changing energy system.

The Strategy will build on and is testing the findings of the ISP to identify the optimal transmission options for NSW. The process of formulating the strategy within the Government is a matter for Government. The Minister made clear the Strategy would be a public one.