



MEDIA RELEASE

Electrifying Tomorrow: localised energy planning in the ISP

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As the future energy landscape continues to evolve with unprecedented pace, as reflected in discussions on new technologies and shifting policy directions, understanding and preparing for these changes is paramount. While much remains uncertain, the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) Integrated System Plan (ISP) ensures we can rely on current data and predictive modelling to navigate the path ahead.

The ISP has laid a strong foundation with its focus on large-scale infrastructure and utility-scale renewables. However, the growing adoption of rooftop solar, batteries, and the electrification of gas and transport necessitates more granular planning and operational strategies for our energy system.

The Enhanced System Planning (ESP) Project, launched in 2023 by the Centre for New Energy Technologies (C4NET), provides a comprehensive, evidence-based framework for integrating distribution systems insights into whole-of-system planning. As the energy sector grapples with rapid changes and increasing complexity, projects like the ESP are crucial for providing investment certainty and effective policy-making.

The ESP Project is developing tools ready to be considered in future ISPs and broader energy policy. It will deliver a comprehensive modelling framework that integrates distribution networks, consumer energy resources, and distributed energy resources to improve whole-of-system planning.

This approach enables the forecast adoption of EVs, electrification of heating and cooling and further uptake of solar and battery storage at a more localised level to be included in future ISPs. This framework aims to guide efficient investments and minimise transition costs, ensuring the benefits of consumer investments are widely enjoyed and shared.

With \$3.6 million in funding, the ESP project was co-created by universities, Distribution Network Service Providers, Energy Consumers Australia, Australian Gas Infrastructure Group, iMove Australia and RACE for 2030; with participation from the Victorian Government and AEMO. The methodologies developed in the ESP project address several actions following the ISP Review by Energy Ministers and has potential for national application.

The ISP Review highlighted the need for a comprehensive modelling framework to integrate all elements of our energy system more effectively. The ESP Project provides the necessary tools to help policymakers, markets, and networks understand the complex relationships between these elements, thereby improving energy system planning overall.

While much of the future energy landscape remains uncertain, we can model current data and what we do know. The ESP can inform an approach to managing the emerging energy load, shape the role of future distribution networks, work with consumers and their energy resources, and provide the data needed to proactively prepare for the energy transition.

Quotes attributable to James Seymour, CEO C4NET

The Enhanced System Planning Project is a pivotal step forward in understanding and managing the dynamic changes occurring in our energy system at the distribution level, and for consumers, from rooftop solar to the electrification of transport.

Our collaboration with universities, industry partners, and government bodies ensures that the ESP project is grounded in expertise and geared towards practical solutions for our energy future—it will provide readymade resources to be considered in future ISPs and broader energy policy development.

For additional information on C4NET and the ESP project please visit c4net.com.au

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