Submission to the public consultation on the South Australian Energy Transformation - ElectraNet

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Confidentiality

This submission does not need to be kept confidential and may be made public.

The Science Party NSW thanks Electranet for the opportunity to make this submission regarding the South Australia-New South Wales Interconnector.

We appreciate the forward-thinking and long-term mindset that drove the SA "big battery" project and support other large, creative projects built with the aim of securing Australians' energy future. Science Party federal policy includes greater linkage of energy markets around Australia.

For the following reasons, the Science Party NSW supports the new interconnector plan. This route will be the obvious missing link in the current NEM in addition to the largely-linear QLD-NSW-VIC-SA linkage.

Increasing reliability for consumers

Electricity demands in NSW are high, and consumers stand to benefit from the increased reliability provided by an SA-NSW interconnector. The added capacity of the interconnector would allow increased use of SA-generated power during Sydney heatwaves, and offers increased redundancy if NSW generation fails.

Decoupling electricity generation from fossil fuels

Export of South Australian electricity is export of renewable energy. Across the country, SA's target of 50% renewables by 2025 is second only to the ACT in its level of ambition. The state's commitment to renewable energy is an experiment that should be given room to thrive.

The interconnector project incentivises the building of new electricity generation infrastructure, including from renewable sources, along the interconnector corridor. Regions of high wind speed identified in Western NSW and the Riverina[1] are ripe for the development of renewable industry infrastructure and jobs.

Affordability

The *Preliminary Analysis of Potential Impact on Electricity Prices* report prepared for ElectraNet for this project identified long-term downward pressure on bills for both SA and NSW consumers.

In the short-term, the interconnector will enable the flow of cheap wind-generated electricity from SA when it is oversupplied. The likelihood of extreme prices during Sydney heatwaves will be reduced by competition and by connecting the network across time zones.

In summary, the projected benefits of the SA-NSW interconnector for NSW residents in particular are substantial, spanning reliability, affordability and reduction of carbon emissions. The Science Party NSW would therefore like to express its support for the project.

[1] Wade S.L., Barry C.M. & Nelson M.D. (compilers) 2017. Renewable energy map of New South Wales (2nd edition). Geological Survey of New South Wales, Maitland.
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